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THE HOLY STONE.

Entered according to Act of the Parliament of Canada, in the year one thousand eight hundred and seventy-eight, by MRS. ELLEN ROSS, in the Office of the Minister of Agriculture.

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EN Ross, in



GRINDING AT THE MILL.

GRINDING AT THE MILL.



AT THE DOOR OF THE SYNAGOGUE.

1410

THE LEGEND

OF

THE HOLY STONE,

EDITED BY

MRS. ALEXANDER ROSS,

Author of

"VIOLET KEITH," "THE WRECK OF THE WHITE BEAR,"
"THE GRAND GORDONS," ETC.

"Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel?"

"Lo! the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations,"

Numbers.

MONTREAL:
PUBLISHED BY A. A. STEVENSON,
No. 245 ST. JAMES STREET.

1879.

"To whom a thousand memories call,
Not being less but more than all,
The gentleness he seemed to be."

"Best seemed the thing he was, and joined
Each office of the social hour,
To noble manners, as the flower
And native growth of noble mind."

"Waiting to strive a happy strife,
To war with falsehood to the knife,
And not to lose the good of life."

"And thus he bore without rebuke
The grand old name of gentleman."

—*Tennyson.*

To

WILLIAM ROBB, Esquire,

CITY AUDITOR OF MONTREAL,

My steadfast friend alike in sunshine and shade,
I dedicate this book as a slight token
of esteem and respect.

Ellen Ross.

Montreal, January, 1878.

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WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

THE
LEGEND OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

CENTURIES ago, in the time of Sebert, king of the East Saxons.

Midnight on a lonely hurst, one side bordered by a deep forest glade, the other by the River Thames. A traveller dressed in the garb of a monk, his feet, protected from the pebbles and thorns which beset his path, only by sandals, his tonsured head, by the hood of his monastic habit.

He had been walking quickly, since he landed from the vessel which brought him from distant Rome, not because the way was long from the vessel's side to the walls of the Abbey he sought, but because he knew, that his errand accomplished, he must return on the morrow with a haste that would leave him no time to indulge in the reminiscences of fifty by-gone years.

This lonely hurst, deserted as it now was, had been the place of his birth, and as the old man, ever and anon, closes his eyes for a moment, he almost feels his mother's soft caress, looks into his father's face, sees him light the sabbath lamp, and feels the touch of his father's hand laid on his head in solemn blessing. The harvest moon,

nearly at its full, was rising majestically over the still landscape. Surrounding objects threw their long shadows on the tranquil waters of the river, while the silvery light of the Queen of heaven played on the crisped surface of each tiny billow as it sobbed thro' the grasses at the traveller's feet. How fresh and sweet everything looked and felt. The monk of seventy years is a boy again, walking among the cornfields and under the shade of the wide spreading branches of the forest oak,—one by his side, who had walked with him over the same brown hurst, and had pressed with her light foot the cowslip and the primrose half a century ago.

Where is she now? — Sleeping soundly under the grass grown turf! — And the dwellings of his people. Where are they? razed to the ground, — the people gone on their weary way, to seek rest among those of a strange tongue, to whom God's chosen are an abomination.

"Alas! alas!" exclaimed the monk, "it is, as it has been, and must be, for thousands of years to come, until the children of the promise 'Tribe of the weary foot and aching breast' have grace given them to believe in Him who came from Edom — travailing in the greatness of his strength — the Nazarene — the Crucified — until then, their harps must still hang on the willows, and they refuse to sing the song of Zion, in a strange land — my people, my own — my beloved."

The stranger covered his face with his amice, lifted up his voice and wept.

The monk has gained the gate of the little monastery,

the lights are still burning in the deep-set windows. He looks up — they are waiting his arrival.

His summons brings two of the lay brethren to the portal.

"Who knocks so late?"

"Father Paul of Rome."

"Welcome, Holy Father."

The gate is thrown open, the monk is taken into their hall, his sandals removed, his feet washed and dried with care, and then, meat and bread, venison and fat capon, with a flagon of mead set before him.

"I have eaten nothing more savoury than herbs and bread, taken no other drink than water for half a century," says Father Paul, as he motions the Frairs to remove the feast they have spread before him.

A supper of bread, herbs and water is brought, of which the holy man partakes sparingly, and then asks to be conducted to the Abbot.

The Superior greets him graciously, and the greeting over.

"You are aware, holy Brother," says the Abbot, "for what purpose you have been sent from distant Rome by our father the Pope?"

"I am not; I have come to do work which a younger man could not do, but what that work is, I must learn from you."

The Abbot points to where, through the deeply embayed window can be seen by the bright moonlight, a newly erected church, around which still lie blocks of unhewn stone, that shew how recently the structure has been finished.

"That church is one which has been built by our good King Sebert, at the request, and with the dower, of his Queen Athelgoda, partly from the ruins of a heathen temple dedicated to Apollo, which once stood on the site where the church is built. The heathen temple was destroyed by an earthquake, and although attempts were made by the worshippers of the God to replace it, they were always prevented by the christians, as they became stronger and stronger in the land; and now, when we try to build a church to the Living God, the demons are at work day and night to prevent its completion. While the church was building, they destroyed by night, what was built by day, until we were almost in despair. At last we held a grand sen' night service for the success of our undertaking, and exorcised the site together with the materials. This has succeeded thus far, — we have been able to raise the walls and finish the inside in a befitting manner, but outside, we have but too conclusive proof that the evil spirits are there as busy as ever, although their power to injure the building is arrested."

"What are the proofs you speak of?"

"Every night we roll the ground around the church, making it smooth and even;—every morning the soft ground is marked by the hoofs of the evil ones."

"May not these marks be made by cattle?"

"No, that is impossible; they are made by bipeds, one step coming in front of another, as a man walks; and within the last two days, there have been marks of hoofs double the size of the others, the stride between them being six feet, good measure, shewing that a demon

of gigantic size has come to aid his brethren in their attempts to overthrow our church."

"What do you wish me to do? you have already exorcised the evil spirits, I can do no more."

"We sent to our Father the Pope for a holy man to consecrate the church."

"Why not do so yourself?"

"I dare not —."

Father Paul turns towards a window that looks out on the eastern sky, and lifting his hands and eyes to Heaven, remains in prayer for a few minutes, and then addressing the Abbot, he says —

"I will consecrate the church to-morrow morning, at five o'clock, by the help of God, and of the holy Angels.—To-night we will spend in fasting and prayer." The chronicle saith not if the younger monks were pleased with this proposal, but it was Father Paul's order, and, for the time, he was to reign supreme in the monastery. At the appointed hour next morning the monks were each in his place, ranged on either side of the high altar, King Sebert and his Queen Athelgoda, their crowns upon their heads, occupying a temporary throne in the nave opposite the chancel. The people had come from the city in such crowds, that the little church was filled with worshippers, to see the consecration, and the holy man who had arrived but yesterday from distant Rome; He, who, as they already knew, lived on bread and water, and would go on his way again by the morning's tide that would float his vessel out to sea.

Father Paul kneels by the high altar—priest and people wait in silent prayer to hear him say the Holy Mass, for the living and the dead. Time is passing,—but Paul the priest of Rome moves not. His head, with the few gray locks that are left unshaven, is bowed over his crossed, uplifted hands, his sandalled feet project from under his amice as he kneels, the bright morning sun from the eastern window falls with a golden sheen on the richly embroidered cope, and stole, bathing the figure of the kneeling priest in a flood of glory from the upper world. A holy hush prevades the place. The people are becoming impatient for the ceremony they have come to see, and move uneasily. The Abbot rises from his knees, and approaches the side of the altar where Father Paul is kneeling, but the old priest moves not—. A murmur among the people, they are not wont to be detained thus—they have already been an hour in waiting,—their fields are white with grain, ready for the harvest,—to-day the sun shines with unwonted glory, to-morrow, there may be mist or rain. Abbot Wolfgang approaches the kneeling priest and whispers in his ear,—What ails the Abbot?—why doth he start, and clasp his hands and groan?

Father Paul, the priest of Rome, is dead!

Who will consecrate the church of St. Peter's?

The body is laid in front of the high altar. King Sebert and Abbot Wolfgang speak in monosyllables and whispers. There is a movement among the people, like the surging of the waves. Abbot Wolfgang raises his hand, as if he would deprecate the least sound of voice, or motion of limb, among those who have come to wor-

ship. The King draws the attention of the Abbot, to the great western door of the nave looking out on the river, it is slowly opening, touched by no human hand; and priest and king, gaze with wondering awe-stricken eyes. The people note the action of the king, the amazement depicted on the faces of both king and priest, and they rise as silently as sunlight falls to the ground,—all eyes turn towards the river, seen through the now open door. What do they see — the priest and his people?

Out in the midst of the broad river, a white misty cloud moves slowly towards the church, the sun is pouring down his beams in brightness and glory, on all around, studding every ripple of the stream with sparkling diamonds. But unaffected by the strong sunshine, the misty cloud moves on and on. There is no wind stirring, — not a breath — yet ever and anon the mist is parted for a moment and the wondering beholders see, now the prow, now the keel of a snow-white bark, freighted with men, arrayed in white garments, but none see either sail or oar. The cloud ascends from the river, exactly in front of the little church and fills the open doorway. The mist disperses, the cloud unrolls itself into two great columns, which take up their position on either side of the portal, and a wonderous Being, with a glory around his head, enters the church, followed by eleven others clad in white raiment. He, the glory crowned one, walks and looks as one having authority; he ascends the steps towards the great altar, followed by his companions.

The churchmen draw back in awe; the men in white apparel take their places. A great burst of heavenly

music ascends from every part of the church, — yet not from the accustomed singers — the people sing not, — nor can they see those who do. The whole place is filled with harmony, the pillars of the church vibrate with the chords, — solemn yet rejoicing — "Te Deum Laudamus," — "Gloria in Excelsis" — a great triumphant shout — filling the people's hearts with joy and awe, unuttered, unexpressed, save by the streaming eyes and the hands lifted to Heaven in wonder, praise and adoration. The mass is said, the work is done. Thus on Thorney Island, centuries ago, was Westminster Abbey first consecrated to God and to St. Peter.

The shining ones have gone as they came, in the white cloud, their boat ascending the river as it had floated down, without sail or oar. The people have gone to their homes in Lunenburg to tell of the wondrous sight they have seen. The monks have retired to their monastery to prepare the body of Father Paul, the priest, for burial. This duty over, Abbot Wolfgang desires to be alone with the dead, — the monks depart each to his cell. The Abbot kneels in prayer, long and earnest, for the soul of him who hath passed away, he has spent hours on his knees, and the gray light of day is fading into night in the west, as he turns to gaze once more on the face of the dead.

The Abbot starts, his eye fixes itself on the face of the dead priest, — "can this be death?" He asks himself — that face without one rigid line, so full of holy repose and calm! surely it cannot be! The Abbot shudders as he thinks what might have been, had they unwittingly committed to the grave an unshriven soul in a living body.

The Abbot's fingers press the cold wrist, there is neither beat nor sign of life there,— the vestment is unfastened, and the priest's warm hand is laid on the breast under which the living heart should beat; it meets his touch, it is rigid and cold as marble.

Yea, verily, the soul of Paul the priest of Rome, with all its hopes and fears, — its stifled longings, — its dead passions, — its long vigils, — its weary fastings, hath passed away from earth forever, had won the goal.

What is it that strikes on the Abbot's fingers, as he withdraws them from the marble breast of the dead? "Perhaps a medal given by our Father the Pope, or some blessed relic," thinks the Abbot, as he lifts it up that he may look upon the holy thing, and then return it to the dead.

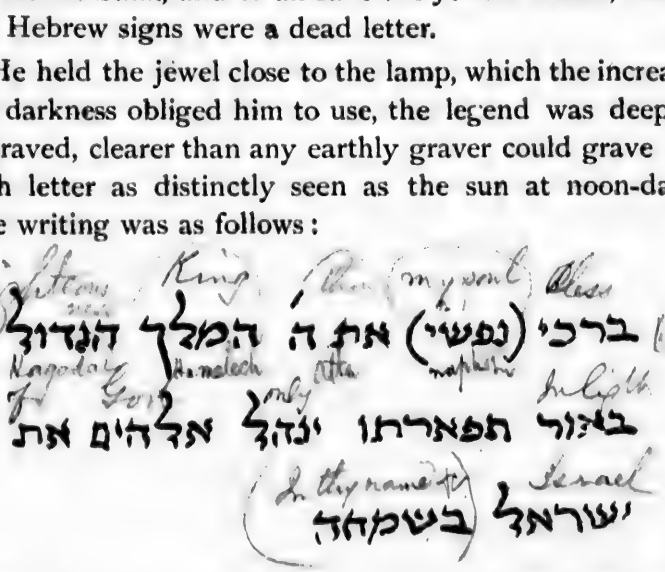
Lo! — the priest's eye falls on the "Holy Stone" which the Angel gave unto Tobias, that it might be a token between the Angel and the Tribe forever, unto all generations. The stone itself, like the beryl and the sapphire — the body of Heaven in its clearness, the Hebrew Legend round the edge.

The Abbot knew the history of the Stone, and of the tribe to which it had belonged, and as he thought, his wonder increased that such a precious relic, had been allowed to fall into the hands of the priest of Rome. He placed the Holy Relic again on the breast of the dead priest, and going to the chest where the archives of the Monastery were kept, selected from amongst others a parchment, written in Hebrew, descriptive of the Holy Stone given by the Angel Raphael to Tobias, and carrying it to the cell where the dead priest lay; compared

its description with the jewel carried by the holy man. The Abbot was right, each Hebrew word,— each character,— tallied with the description given by the Jewish Rabbi.

Abbot Wolfgang was a learned man, taught in Rome by those who made the Hebrew Scriptures the study of their lives, but the wondrous words which now met his eyes were beyond his ken. The Hebrew legend was written in the same strange characters as those traced by the finger of God, on the tables of stone given to Moses, on Mount Sinai, and to all save the Jewish Rabbi, those old Hebrew signs were a dead letter.

He held the jewel close to the lamp, which the increasing darkness obliged him to use, the legend was deeply engraved, clearer than any earthly graver could grave it, each letter as distinctly seen as the sun at noon-day. The writing was as follows:



The Abbot gazed until his eyes were dazzled, his sight dim,— in vain,— in vain, the words were written for God's people, chosen of old, and the Gentile priest knoweth them not — may never know them.

There was one discrepancy, the Holy Stone was des-

tined to fall into the hands of the Gentiles, but the prophecy was clear.

"It will come (to the Gentiles) with a woman, it must go back (to the Hebrew) by a woman."

The Abbot asks himself the question, "How can this be,— Father Paul the priest of Rome was no woman?"

Abbot Wolfgang knows not that Father Paul, the priest of Rome, was a Hebrew of the Hebrews — a Rabbi of the Tribe of Judah — who had counted all earthly gain as naught, that he might serve the despised Nazarene — take up His cross and follow in His train.

The vesper prayers are ended,— each priest has gone to his cell. The eyes of all within the monastery are sealed in slumber, all save those of Abbot Wolfgang, and he on his palfrey has taken the way to King Sebert's castle, there to deliver the Holy Stone to Athelgoda, King Sebert's queen.

CHAPTER II.

RUBY.

"It hath come with a woman,
It must go by a woman."

SUCH were the words of Abbot Wolfgang more than a thousand years ago as he delivered the Holy Stone to Athelgoda.

And the Holy Stone descended from King Sebert's Queen to her son, and to her son's sons, from generation to generation. And after the Norman conquest, when the old Saxon Seberts had changed their names to the more euphonious one of Seymore, the Holy Stone was theirs still, bequeathed by father to son, from century to century, and each Baron, whether Saxon Sebert, or Norman Seymore, down to the middle of the nineteenth century, as the time drew near for him to be a father, waited, with anxious heart and bated breath, to learn if a son or a daughter had been born to him. For over a thousand years, the ladies of Seymore Castle had borne sons. Godfrey Earl Seymore was the last of his race. The clock had tolled the midnight hour, yet with long strides his heavy restless foot, paced from east to west of his castle hall, making the old walls re-echo with his foot-falls. Looking out from the eastern windows on the dark, stormy billows of the ocean, climbing with white crests the rocky height on which his castle stood,

from the west the straggling moonbeams shewing him the dark pine forest away on the hills.

An old white haired man who has served the Seymores for fifty years, enters the hall.

"What news, Godfrey? have you brought me word my son is born?"

"God give you grace to be patient, Baron Seymore, your lady dwells in everlasting night, your child is a daughter."

Lord Seymore was a disappointed man, he had loved his wife with the passion of a boy, and now he mourned her with the unreason of a boy. He, like his forefathers, had longed for a son, he had neither the wealth nor the land of the old Seymores to bequeath to a son, but he had still his title of Baron, Castle Seymore and the Holy Stone. Of what avail was his title to a girl, she could not inherit it? Castle Seymore and its land was a mere strip from the sea to the hills, hemmed in on either side by the possessions of Lord Sydenhault that in the old time had belonged to the Seymore's. And the Holy Stone,—did not his child's sex point to the time, when it must go back to the Hebrew from whom it came? It seemed as if the waves of fate, were about to bury the old Seymore name in oblivion, and he had no power, scarcely a wish to combat them.

Lady Seymore had been laid in her grave for fourteen years, yet Baron Seymore mourned for her as he had mourned, the first hour he knew she had left him. His child had remained so long unbaptized, that the servants

and visitors in lieu of another name called her Ruby, from a necklace taken off her dead mother's neck, and put upon the child's. And when at length she was baptized, because her father was shamed into it by the clergyman (whose ministrations he rather professed to attend than attended,) and by the persuasion of the Ladies, who with their Lords, still came to spend a few autumn days, in shooting or fishing at the old castle, her name of Ruby had become a part of herself, and her baptismal name of Edith was a superfluity.

Ruby was the darling of the old castle, wandering among its picture-hung rooms, talking in her childish way to the old Barons and their Ladies, whose ancestral faces hung around, every one of whom, from King Sebert and his Queen, down to her beautiful mother, she knew by name, and, who she fancied, were living, breathing beings, almost as near to her as was her silent father.

Her best loved, and most frequented play-ground was the quaint old garden, the old gardener, her especial play-mate, and to him she was the glory and the darling of Seymore castle. Taught by old Jasper, the child would try to win her father from his solitary library, his lonely walks, and, looking up in his face with her pleading violet eyes, would entreat beseechingly to be taken with him.

"Take Ruby with you, Papa; dear Papa, don't leave your little girl alone."

The heart-sick father would look down on the face of childish loveliness, framed in its wealth of golden hair upturned to his own, and say in his heart.

"You are too like my lost love, I cannot bear to have you beside me," and taking her small hand in his would lead her to the garden, leaving her with old Jasper, and betake himself to the deep pine woods, there to indulge his morbid melancholy unmolested.

Ruby had attained her fourteenth year. If her father had been indifferent to all else, he had taken every care that his daughter should be educated in a manner befitting her rank. An accomplished governess had been provided, who in a certain measure supplanted Mistress Monica, her nurse, in the care of Ruby; professors of music came several times a week from the next town; the daughters of the neighbouring gentry were invited at stated times to visit her. Everything was done to fit her for the place she must fill as the Lady of Castle Seymore, and as she walked, with stately step and silent maiden smile, beside the flower beds, or under the shade of the beech and oak trees on the mossy lawn, Jasper began to believe that, as in the old time, an angel had come down to bless this green earth.

In Ruby's fourteenth year, a sudden change came over the inhabitants of the old castle, Lord Seymore was, without any desire on his part, appointed to be Deputy keeper of the records, in the Tower of London. He cared not for the honour, but it was one he could not well refuse.

Previous to his departure from Seymore Castle, Lord Seymore brought Ruby into a room he called his laboratory, and taking from his own neck an antique gold chain, the links of which seemed made more with a view to strength than fine workmanship, placed it in Ruby's

hand that she might examine the jewel pendant from its centre. The jewel consisted of a sapphire the size and thickness of a chestnut, bound round by a thick band of gold, on which were engraved strange characters, which no man, *save the Jewish High Priest* could read. The stone sparkled with such brilliancy that Ruby's eyes were dazzled with the sight, she turned the other side, and there, the stone became like the beryl, the onyx, and the opal.

"This jewel," said her father, "is one which has been in our family for generations, it has descended from father to son, each Baron Seymore has worn it. I have no son, I cannot leave you without putting this on your neck, it must be rivetted on, it must never be taken off while you live, neither must you shew it to any one; when you get older, I will tell you why.—You will obey me, my child?"

"My dear father, I will."

Lord Seymore, by the aid of the forge in his laboratory, rivetted the chain round Ruby's neck, putting a gold cover upon the jewel, by which it was entirely hid, the whole being placed under the folds of her dress.

The arrangements for the Baron's departure were simple and easily made, his sister, a lady with a large family, whose means were limited, undertook the care of his child and his castle, she and her family taking up their residence there.

Mrs. Wolferstan, was to be mistress of the Castle, Colonel Wolferstan, to take charge of the estate and all outside affairs; Ethel Wolferstan, a girl two years older than Ruby was received by the latter with joy; now a great want she had sighed over from her infancy was

supplied, she had a companion. The girls loved each truly, Ethel's brown eyes, and long dark hair being the admiration of Ruby, who, until she saw her cousin, had never seen so fair a face except in her mirror, and that, looked on from infancy, had no charm for its possessor.

Two years had passed since Lord Seymore had left his castle, Ethel shared in all Ruby's lessons and equalled her in quickness. Mr. Sydney, their French and German master, was a young man scarcely twenty years of age, the son of a widow who had lately come to settle at Sydenhault Oaks, the town which Seymore castle, with its broad lawns and old rookery almost divided in two; the commercial part, its streets sloping almost perpendicularly down to the wharves, east of the rocky height on which the castle stood, while the residence of professional men, and of old half-pay officers, occupied the table-land to the west; the little town like the castle, was bounded on one side by the sea, on the other by the hills and dark pine woods.

Mr. Sydney had been educated partly in France and partly in Germany, his father, an artist whose pictures,—beautiful works of art which adorned the walls of the widow's humble dwelling,—had gained the painter a name and little else. His widow lived on a small annuity her own heritage, her son earning a precarious pittance by teaching the languages he had spoken in his boyhood, and understood perhaps better than his own. This it was that introduced him to Seymore Castle, as the French and German master of its heiress.

Herbert Sydney had a rarely beautiful face, his dark

brown eyes and hair suited well with the complexion almost olive, the rich blood painting freshly both cheek and lip, his figure tall and handsome, his manners refined, almost courtly, such an one, as a wise parent would not have entertained the idea of making preceptor to, or even bringing in contact with, young ladies of rank so superior to his own.

Mrs. Wolferstan considered the presence of Miss Crompton, a very stiff, precise governess of at least forty years of age, amply sufficient to prevent advances on the young man's part; as to Ruby, she ignored the very idea of a girl of fourteen years old even thinking of a lover, she herself at that age would have been better pleased with a box of sugar plums or a bright sash, and she measured Ruby's sensitive, loving temperament by her own obtuse nature.

In Ethel she had all confidence; she had been her daughter's instructress with regard to her choice of a a husband; the first thing to be looked for, was an eldest son, a title if possible, in any case a fortune must be secured, without which marriage was almost a sin. Mrs. Wolferstan with dense stupidity, directed her daughter's attention to the life of almost privation they had all endured, owing to her own want of caution in marrying a man who had only expectations from an uncle, which uncle, was still, after a lapse of eighteen years, hale and hearty, while his nephew Colonel Wolferstan's hair was turning grey.

Alas! how sadly she had miscalculated and misjudged the hearts and heads of both girls.

Herbert Sydney spent two hours each day at Seymore Castle, reading from the same book, now with Ruby, now with Ethel, leaning over first one fair head, and then the other, as he read and corrected exercises. Two happy years for the fair girls and the handsome boy, enfolding all three in a mantle of romance and sunshine,— to end in what ?— separation,— exile and toil in a foreign land,— anxious, beating hearts, full of unrest.

Ethel Wolferstan, loved Herbert Sydney with a love full of passionate hopes, which even then, made her cheek pale as marble when the possibility of separation in after years crossed her brain, but she put these thoughts from her with a strong will, she had never been thwarted in all her life, and she would not be thwarted now.

And Herbert Sydney, what of him ? did he love the beautiful dark haired girl, whose eyes met his with such a flash of joy as he taught her to say with clearer pronunciation and less of English accent, *"je vous aime ?"*

Yes, Herbert Sydney loved both these fair girls, each in her degree, Ethel with her sparkling eye and speaking brow and lip, her graceful step and figure rounded like a Hebe, was the object of his admiration, and sometimes of his wonder, her intellect, so far in advance of the other girls of her age whom he taught, made him sometimes ask himself how it was possible she could know so much. He loved her as he might a goddess, an angel or a star he might never hope or wish to win, but Ruby in her youthful innocence had all his unfettered heart.

He had never asked himself the question "what is to come of all this ?" In the last two years his love had

become part of his being. Poor boy! he was soon to have his awakening from his dream of fair girls,— low soft music,— sunlit grassy knolls,— wild thyme and roses. His eyes were to open upon hideous rocks, a wild sea,—

CHAPTER III.

ST. WOLFGANG'S WELL.

THE day had been dark and gloomy, but had cleared up towards evening, the girls had been in the house all day, and they now proposed to go for a long walk up among the hills in the pine wood. Away they went, climbing the hill outside the castle gate, and were soon lost to sight amid the laurel and mountain ash growing half way up. Ethel stopped at a narrow path leading to a spring of clear water welling out of the rock, and falling into a deep stone basin below, which, with a semi-circular seat cut in the rock tradition said had been made for the benefit of thirsty travellers, by Abbot Wolfgang, in the old Saxon times, and was still called St. Wolfgang's Well.

"We will go down and have a nice, cool draught of water at St. Wolfgang's well," said she; "we have three hours of daylight left and we will make the most of them."

The girls ran down the narrow winding path on the hill, and for the hundredth time stood on tiptoe to read the legend cut in the rock above.

Stop, weary pilgrim, stop and tell
Your beads beside this holy well,
And pray that you in heaven may meet
The Saint who built this well and seat.

They then drank of the cool water, making cups of their rosy hands, sitting on the stone seat with their faces seaward.

"Look at that!" exclaimed Ethel, pointing down to the beach, which was seen clearly from the height where they sat, "St. Wolfgang's chair is clear of the sea, this is what I have been watching for ever since we came to Seymore, if we walk quickly we shall be in time to climb up and sit in the Saint's chair before the tide turns, it is still going out."

St. Wolfgang's chair, of which Ethel spoke, was a great rock whose base was generally hid by the waves, it was beyond the low tide mark, hence it was only at certain seasons of the year accompanied by very low tides, that the base could be reached dry shod, but it *could* be reached and the rock climbed. Several adventurous young ladies in the upper town were wont to boast of having climbed it, and eaten their luncheon sitting on the Saint's seat, and looking through his window at the ships as they sailed out to sea. The window referred to being an immense hole formed in the pointed top of the rock, through which one could look by standing on the shelving portion below, where tradition said the Saint had both sat and slept for years previous to his death; fed, Elijah-like, by the rooks from the castle rookery.

Ruby was overjoyed at the prospect of this rather hazardous expedition, to sit in St. Wolfgang's seat was an old ambition of hers, and one which she had never had a chance of realizing under the staid rule of Monica and Miss Crompton.

Away the girls went at a brisk rate, almost in a straight line through the principal street in the upper town. As they passed a corner house, Ethel glanced along the upper windows, smiled and bowed to some one who looked out at herself and Ruby.

"That is Mrs. Sydney's house," said she, blushing as she spoke, "and Mr. Sydney is sitting at the window."

"How do you know it is Mrs. Sydney's house?" asked Ruby.

"I know it, that is enough, if you wish to be sure look back, you will see Mr. Sydney still sitting there looking after us."

Ruby's heart beat quicker as her cousin spoke, and the hot blood mounted to her cheek and brow; she did not look back neither did she reply but she asked herself the question, so often within the last two years thought of, never spoken, "which of us does Herbert Sydney like best?"

The girls passed on to the table-land above the rocks which lined the shore, and seeking out one of the many winding foot-paths leading to the sea, tripped lightly down to the beach.

Herbert Sydney looked at his watch as they passed, it was eight o'clock, he leaned from his window until they entered the sea-ward path, and were lost to his sight in their winding descent.

"What can bring them to walk on the sea-shore at this hour?" he asked himself, "I wish I could follow them and take them home; I hope they will not attempt to gather shells, the tide will turn in half an hour, and it is a spring tide to-night."

The lad at one moment felt impelled by some inward monitor to follow the two girls, one of whom was all the world to him, the next moment drawing back from an act which he feared might be deemed intrusive.

Why do we listen to these spirit warnings and heed them not, until the time when we might have saved ourselves or others has passed away forever?

The girls had mistaken the place where the pathway winding among the grassy knolls, would come out, and when at last they gained the beach they were a long way from St. Wolfgang's Rock. They were not to be foiled however, the obstacle of a walk along the sandy beach was not to prevent the achievement of their purpose.

The rock is gained, they are standing almost at its base, close by the reef of smaller rocks which make it impossible for boats to come to shore near St. Wolfgang's bed.

These rocks were so completely covered with seaweed, that the girls were almost tempted to turn back; they look up to the great hole in the top of the rocky height, — that decides them, wet feet or not they will go on, besides, they say to each other, "It may not be so wet after all,"— they wonder when they feel how hard the wet sand is, covered as it nearly always is by deep water, their feet only leave the slightest prints, scarcely a dent, it is so hard.

The base of the rock is covered by sea-weed many feet in depth, it is a troublesome ascent, they fall back again so often,— they have to climb with hands and feet both;

but it is done with mirth and laughter, the very toil is part of the pleasure.

"How we shall surprise them all," said Ethel, when the worse part of the ascent was over, "when we tell them of our perilous adventure, of our many falls amongst the sea-weed, and our climbing and clinging to the sharp, jutting edges of the rock, I daresay they will scarcely believe us."

"They will believe us when they see our hands and dresses," replied Ruby, "my gloves are gone long ago down among the sea-weed, my dress is torn, and my hands are scratched and bleeding; but I do not feel it in the least,— Oh! I am so glad we came; if I were a boy I would be a sailor or a fisherman, and live all the time out among the rocks."

The top is gained,— and they sit down to rest on the Saint's bed, now that the excitement is over, feeling tired enough. The Saint's bed looks toward the hills, and they can see nothing from thence save the rocks lining the shore, and the green banks sloping up to the table-land above, beyond all, the outline of the pine woods on the other side of the village. They turn round, and standing on the seat, look out to sea through the Saint's window. There indeed is a sight that fills their hearts and eyes both. Far out in the offing, one — two — three ships distinctly to be seen, while as they strain their sight, and their eyes become accustomed to sea and sky, they can discern first one sail, and then another; one is making for the harbour of Sydenhault Oaks. They stand there for some time counting the

little fishing boats following one another, their white sails glittering in the rays of the setting sun, as they stand out to sea. Suddenly Ruby looks down the side of the rock on which they stand, and calls the attention of her cousin to the waves at its base, saying with white lips —

"Look, Ethel! look!"

"What a little goose you are," laughed Ethel, "don't you know that the sea is always deep on this side of the rock, the sand will be dry on the other side for an hour after the tide turns, and it has not turned yet."

Alas! alas! the tide was turning as the girls were climbing the rock!

The fishing boats sail on and on, passing within sight of the girls, as they come out from the harbour of Sydenhault Oaks,— how beautiful they look, each with its white sail spread to catch the breeze,— the wind is light, it is scarcely felt. The ship they were watching is now clearly in view, sails, masts and hull, are all visible. They watch the fishing boats again. The clouds seem to have come between them and the boats, they look so dim, and yet it is such a short time since they came out; they cannot have gone so far as to make them look dim like that. They look at the incoming ship, — they cannot see her so well as they saw her before, — simultaneously they look at the sky, it is growing dark, a few drops of rain fall upon their upturned faces. They do not utter a word, but they look into each others eyes, and each white face tells the other its silent tale, — they must haste to leave the rock, — they wish they had not staid so long.

Their heads are drawn quickly in from the Saint's window, and descending from the seat they looked down to where, when they climbed up the rock, lay a wet, sandy beach, with a belt of thickly growing sea-weed reaching far above their heads; — there is now neither sand nor sea-weed to be seen, only a wide waste of waters. The great, swelling waves of the spring tide with their white foaming crests climbing far up on the beach, between them and the rocky banks! They neither moved nor spoke, — they scarcely breathed, yet each young girl knew but too well there was at least ten feet of water around the rock at the shallowest place, that every moment it was becoming deeper, and deeper. The rain was falling heavy and cold; darkness fast coming on. They clasped each other's hands, and looked with piteous eyes each in the pale face of the other, as if they would plead to their Father in heaven for the help they despaired of. Ruby was the first to speak.

"We must sit here all night, and with our white dresses, make a flag that will attract the attention of the fishing boats when they are coming home."

Ethel answered not; she knew that no fishing boat could come near St. Wolfgang's Rock, owing to the belt of breakers which surrounded it. She feared it was the time of the spring tides. She calculated as well as she was able the time of the full moon, alas! it was but too surely the spring tide, and the waves ere midnight would be passing and repassing through St. Wolfgang's window, to which they now clung, two feet above the seat.

Looking from the castle tower, she had seen the sea more than once foaming and boiling over the rock, the jagged point above the window hidden as the base; that it would be so to-night she knew too well!

"Can you swim, Ruby?"

"Oh! no! Can *you* swim, Ethel?"

"I wish I could; I never saw the sea until we came to live at Seymore castle."

"Perhaps one of the ship's crew might see us, if we tear open one of our dresses and hold it up."

"If they could, how can they save us from a rock that a boat cannot come near?"

"Perhaps some brave seaman might swim to the rock and take us off.— I'll try it. Ruby unfastened her white muslin dress, and tearing it from its belt, let it float out to the breeze.

"Dear Ruby, it is worse than useless doing that, no one can see so small a flag so far away, the night is coming on dark and rainy. I have brought you out here to die."

"No, Ethel, you didn't bring me here, I wanted to come as much as you did. I have never seen the sea beyond the base of the rock but twice before, and both times I cried because Monica would not allow me to try to climb up."

Ethel did not reply, her heart was too full and sad for words, she was certain they had come to St. Wolfgang's Rock to die; she felt that ere midnight they would both be washed out to sea, and her brain reeled

as she remembered Ruby's white face an hour ago, when gazing with affright on the leaping waves she said, "Look, Ethel! look!" Had she heeded the warning then, they might now have been safe.

The sea comes up and up, higher and higher towards them, each wave as it comes on, rising to their feet.

"We will pray to God, Ethel, He who made the sea and the rocks, He can save us."

Ruby clasps her white hands together, and kneels down on the Saint's seat. The waves leap up and up, higher and higher towards them, roaring like living creatures round their feet. They are drenched with the salt sea water to their knees. They stand on the Saint's bed, clinging to the jagged projections round the window. But the sea, like some remorseless monster that will not let them go, follows them; it will soon reach them even there. Ruby pleads with clasped hands and upturned face — "Our Father, which art in Heaven."

Ethel's lips move not, but the cry of her soul ascends to the footstool of the Great All Father. "(O Lord have mercy, have mercy upon us.")

CHAPTER IV.

HERBERT SYDNEY sat watching for the return of the young ladies of Seymore Castle.

The evening was waning, but surely there was no cause for fear in two girls walking on the sea shore, or even on the sands! What could harm them? So he reasoned with himself, yet his restlessness and anxiety to follow them increased almost every minute. The room door opened, and the old servant who, aided by a little girl, served Mrs. Sydney as both cook and housemaid, made her appearance.

"Mr. Herbert, the Missus desired me ask you to go to Miss Devine's to bring her home at half-past nine."

"Very well, Sarah, I'll go."

Motion was a relief, he looked at his watch, the hand pointed to half-past nine. He snatched up his hat, and shortly presented himself in Miss Devine's modest sitting-room, where he found his mother rather impatient to be at home. Adieux over, they took their homeward way.

"I am very uneasy to-night, mother."

"What makes you so?"

"I fancy you will laugh if I tell you what it is."

"Even if I do laugh, the best way to dissipate your disquiet is to tell its cause to another."

"Then I will tell you, about an hour ago, I saw Miss Seymore and her cousin go towards the sea-shore, by one of the footpaths leading from the plateau down the cliffs, and they have not yet returned," — he stopped.

"I see no cause for uneasiness in this, further than that it is late for young ladies in their position to be abroad unattended."

"That is true, and had they taken an opposite direction for their walk, I probably should not have felt disturbed about it, but they are both fearless, and somehow I fancy they have gone to gather sea-shells; to-night is the spring tide, the sea will come rapidly in, and may cover the beach."

"Then why don't you take a walk to the shore by the way they went, find them, and bring them home?"

This was exactly what the young man wished to do, and its being suggested by another, made it seem right to him that he should do as he wished.

"I will, I'll leave you at the door, and go in search of them; I cannot be gone more than an hour."

Hebert Sydney is wandering about on the top of the cliffs, straining his eyes in all directions in search of two girlish figures in white muslin dresses. It is raining, and the night is getting darker every moment, no moving object of any kind is to be seen; he calls out with all his strength. His answer comes from the moaning sea. "Surely," he says, speaking aloud, "they cannot be on the beach so late; yet I must satisfy myself that they are not; they most likely returned while I was at Miss Devine's."

The sea was so dark that if any moving object in white was on the beach, he could not have failed to see it.

"Yet," he said to himself, "it is but a half hour's run to the water's edge, I shall sleep sounder for the exercise."

He sought one of the foot-paths leading to the shore, and descending the rocky height, found the white-crested waves covering both the sand and the shingle beach, dashing up the rocky heights; half an hour ago, in the dim light, he had mistaken the crested waves for the white beach. The rocks hemmed him in on either side, and he shuddered as he thought — could the girls have been caught by a retreating wave? The rain ceased, and the moon which had been hidden beneath the clouds, shone bright above the expanse of waters. Herbert Sydney looked up to the suddenly brightened heavens, and beheld two girls clinging to the opening in the peaked top of St. Wolfgang's Rock! The waves climbing one after another up to their feet, like white-maned monsters, the spray dashing over the heads of the girls, and over the rock they clung to! In an instant his coat and shoes were off and on the ground, and he himself amid the waste of waters, swimming with sturdy strokes towards the rock.

Herbert Sydney was a famous swimmer. As a school-boy, he had swum in sport with his fellows across the Rhine; his heart was now in his work, and in less time than he had given himself as he entered the water and measured the distance with his eye, he was standing on the Saint's seat, and lifting Ruby in his arms to help her

down to the declivity where it was safest to enter the water.

"Take Ethel first, I cannot go until I know that she is safe."

There was no time to parley; Herbert had full confidence in his power to save both, but each moment was of importance; a minute more or less might make or mar his work.

It was not possible to lift Ethel as he could have lifted Ruby; taking her hand he directed her how to keep hold of his clothes without impeding his power of motion; an instant more and both were launched amid the waves!

CHAPTER V.

THE FISHERMEN.

"UNLESS those lads leave their look out before ten minutes time, they'll have wet jackets when they reach the shore," said Thaniel Reil, to his sons, who with the old man, formed the crew of one of th fishing boats which passed the Saint's Rock, going out to sea on the twentieth of May 18 —

The youngest son had a pocket glass which he applied to his eye, and at once saw that the heads were those of girls; on telling this to his father, the old man and the elder boys laughed, saying:

"Haco has been thinking of girls. He sees those that were in his thoughts."

The boy still adhered to his statement that he saw the heads of two girls, one with fair hair shining in th light of the rosy clouds, which still marked the sl where the sun had set. The old man looked through the glass; they were now further off, and the outline only of the figures could be distinctly seen, they were either girls or very young boys.

As they went out to sea, the waves began to assume larger proportions; there was a ground swell, the night was falling. The oldest son observed: "It is going to be a stronger incoming tide to-night than we have had for seven years."

The old man had for some time been thinking of those heads they saw on the rock, and bade his son try if he

could see them again through the glass. The boy could not discern the figures as before, but saw the white muslin floating out from the rock. "We will turn about lads, and see who they are," said the father, "they have put that out for a signal; they want help."

"We cannot get near them, father, for the sunk rocks, and we shall lose our night's fishing," replied the eldest son; "it's some boys from the town who are trying to play a trick, and make the fisher boats turn back from their work."

"I dinna think that, Hugh man. I have done nothing but think o' them foolish creatures up there since we passed them, and so we'll een go about and see if they need help. If foolish Aldie was to perish there to-night, I should never forget my sin in putting the life o' a fellow creature against what we could gain for a week, far less one night's work. It's no a poor fool like Aldie that's there, but them that would be sore missed at some man's fireside, so we'll just let t'boat go about."

The two eldest lads put the boat in order for returning towards the rock, although it was with no good grace; they thought they were on a fool's errand, and one by which they would lose a night's work; their time was their money. The darkness was spreading over land and sea, and a heavy rain falling. The lads pulled at their oars with willing hands; if they were to go home, the sooner they were there the better, a storm was brewing. As they neared St. Wolfgang's rock, the sight they saw made them hold their breath. The moon was out, the rain clouds passed away.—Up between them and the sky were three figures clinging to the rock between the

Saint's bed and the needle eye, hidden to the waist by the waves.

The fishermen called aloud to attract attention to themselves if possible ; they were too far off to be heard. —Two of the figures plunged into the waves and made for the shore.

The fishermen laid to their oars as if their very lives depended on each boat's length they made ; on and on they went, their eyes fixed on the swimmers. A huge wave came thundering past, almost upsetting the boat with its little crew ; they soon righted. The same remorseless sea, caught the swimmer and her he sought to save, and hurled them out beyond St. Wolfgang's rock, yet so near the boat that the fishermen could hear the screams of the girl, and see her white robes.

They pulled as they never pulled before, each moment seemed a life time. The boat stops — two of the fishermen are in the sea. — The swimmer and the girl are both seized ! — They are saved ! — They are in the boat.

A second time they pull for the rock.—Above these dangerous breakers the eddying whirl of the waves threaten every moment to whelm their little bark.

Up and up the huge billows climb like wild sea horses ; St. Wolfgang's bed is covered by the waves, the spray mounting high above its utmost peak, at times hiding the figure of Ruby completely from sight. The waves are swelling to greater volume every moment. The boat is like a cockle shell on those wild angry waters, every inch of canvass is lying in the bottom of the boat. It takes the strength of the four men to keep her afloat and

in motion. Herbert Sydney is standing in the bow, every nerve strung to its utmost tension. The little vessel makes more headway in a second, than he as a swimmer could make in sixty. The eyes of all are fixed on the rock. The pointed top, with Ruby clinging there, one moment distinctly seen, the next hidden by sea foam. The great roller which returns with every ninth wave, comes thundering on. It is now the old Dane, the descendant of the Sea King, shews his seamanship,— he calls aloud to his boys,— he adroitly turns the helm.— The boat rides on the top of the wave like a great sea-bird. A moment more they are as near the rock as they dare venture.

Herbert Sydney is again in the sea, battling with the waves. Great swelling waves, which were he not the swimmer he is, would sweep him past the rock out to mid ocean.

His head is raised, his eyes fixed on the rock. It is the backward sweep of the waves; the spray is down for a moment — Merciful Heaven! the sea sweeps over the rock — and Ruby is nowhere to be seen!

The men in the boat utter a cry of horror. Ethel's great dark eyes are fixed on the waste of water.—A low wail of despair passes from her white parched lips.— "Ruby! — Ruby!" The swimmer is striving as a man never strove for his life. He knows by the eddy and whirl exactly where the peak of the rock is, hidden though it be. The clouds are scudding swiftly over the moon, she is shining now with a light as bright as day on the spot; he is so near he distinctly sees Ruby's head, its golden hair floating out on the waters.

Another great wave sweeps past, he must battle with it, or it will sweep him towards the shore. His eye never for one moment relaxes its hold of the golden hair. The waves are mounting up over the rock, forming a cone of white spray around and above it, as if a water spout had gathered there, and was striving to rejoin the moisture in the upper air.

From the boat the fishermen see the swimmer enter the whirling cone of spray. With faces white with horror they look into each other's eyes. The old man groans aloud, Ethel sits with clenched hands a ' staring eyes as if bereft of reason. A minute passes or perhaps two, they seem like hours. The old man is the first to speak. "God help us — they are both gone — may He receive their souls in mercy. — We are no use here now, — take to your oars, lads."

The old Dane looks out over the waters that he may set his helm for the safest way home. The lads grasp their oars, which, since the swimmer left them, they have been holding lightly; merely to keep the boat steady. The boy Haco gives a loud huzza! — They all turn their faces in the direction of the rock. — The swimmer is coming towards them out of the spray, battling the waves with one arm, the other firmly grasping Ruby! The two lads who were in the sea before plunge in a second time — Herbert Sydney and Ruby are safe in the boat.

The old man takes off his heavy boat cloak, Ruby is enfolded in it and placed beside Ethel, who is lying on the sails in the bottom of the boat.

Herbert Sydney kneels beside Ruby, and gently

wrings the sea water from her hair; she has neither opened her eyes nor spoken a word since she was taken from the rock.

"What way shall we get the ladies home?" said Thaniel Reil, when they had turned the boat in the direction of Sydenhault Oaks harbour; "when we get to the pier, they're too wet and weary to walk, the young one looks as if she would never walk again."

"If we're in time to see the steamboat off," replied his son, I would na' wonder but the Honorable Mr. Penryth will send them home in his coach himsel; t'old Countess and t'mad Lord and two or three of t'servants are all going to take a trip in t'steamboat for t'old lady's health, but t'steamboat starts at midnight, and I reckon its nigh that already; we have a half hour's good rowing before we'll come to the pier."

The father looked up to the sky and then down to the shadows of the oars, as they fell on the moonlit waves.

"Ay" said he, "we'll be there in time, but ye'll have to draw your oars to ye, ye'll take all ye're time. "I wonder," continued the fisherman, "if that proud peat will let the poor things wet as they are, into his coach, it'll cost him a new red silk lining if he does, and he does'na like to draw his purse strings, but if they do na' get into t'coach, he can na' refuse the dog cart that the servants 'ill come in."

"Mr. Penryth will not refuse the use of his coach to Lord Seymore's daughter and her cousin," said Herbert Sydney.

"No, that he won't, if they're ladies of that quality," said Hugh "and they look just like it, but what made gentlefolk like them be rampin up on the rocks so late at e'en, wi a young lad like you?"

"The ladies came out to walk alone, and probably seeing the rock bare for the first time, climbed up to enjoy the view from the Saint's Bed, as I and doubtless you have done when the rock could only be reached by wading up to the knees through salt water. I did not come down to the beach until the waves were above the sand and the shingle both, and nearly up to the Saint's seat on the rock."

"Your a mettlesome chap," said the father, to try to save two of them from the top of yon rock, and nobody to help you.

"My efforts would have been of small avail had you not come with your boat to the rescue when you did, had you been three minutes sail further off I doubt much if either they or I would have been living now."

"Do you bide in the town, or are you one of the Castle folks too?"

"I have no such good fortune as to live in a Castle. I am a teacher, and know the young ladies because I have taught them for two years."

"If you're a schoolmaster, you know better how to speak to Mr. Penryth than me or my boys, so when we come to the pier, you'll as well go for'ard and bespeak the coach from his Lordship; he's a proud upsetting man, and may be he has a right t'be that, being at he's

lord of all t'country round, only t'little bit that follows Castle Seymore from t'sea to t'hills, but I heard an old scotchman from Balmoral where t'Queen goes to take the fresh air every summer, say at, 'she speaks to all t'poor folk round about,' and he'll have to stand wi' his hat in his hand in her presence, I'll warrant ye."

"He's a man I can no abide," said Hugh, taking up his speech where his father left off, "and there's few that like him, I'll warrant. I would spend all my hard won earnings for a month, to see him stand in the Queen's Castle door quite humble with his hat off, an' her goin' past an' never letting her eyes touch him, wi' her gold crown on her head, and her velvet robes covered wi' diamonds, trailing behind her so grand, that would pay off all my scores to him. I have gone to the Hall wi' the best o' our fish every week for five years, many a hundred times he's passed me, and I always lift my hat quite respectful, but he never yet had t'tongue that said, good een or good day to me."

"Well Hugh, if ye serve t'King o'Kings, He'll speak to ye and call ye his faithful servant when t'Honorable Mr. Penryth is lying in t'ground, and his land an title no one bit o'good to him."

"If t'mad Lord were to get his wits again, they would no be much to him t'day" said Hugh.

"How is that?" inquired Herbert Sydney, interested to hear about this proud man, he was to ask a favor from, if he were fortunate enough to find him on the wharf.

"Because," replied old Thaniel, "Lord Sydenhault, t'eldest brother was long away in foreign parts, and come

home wrong in t'head just before his father died, and he never got his mind' back again, an so Mr. Penryth rules 'aw out an in, but gin t'mad Lord wad get his senses back again, he wid turn over a new leaf. I 'ave had many a crack wi' t'Forester about both t'gentlemen, an' he says its a real pity, Lord Sydenhault was always as good as gold and t'one that has aw' the power now boy and man t'same, never a kind look or a cheery word to give to anyone. But you see, a man out o'his mind could na' guid his land or his siller, so they had to change places, t'old Lady is stone blind for many a year back, but she takes good care of Lord Sydenhault for all that. He's very fond of fishing, (t'foolish one) and I whiles have her Ladyship's orders to bring up bait for him mysel, and she aye comes to the lawn with t'mad Lord when I bring t'bait, and speaks real kind, and t'Forester says she never lets him away from her, he leads her about everywhere, but I'm thinkin it's her at takes cares o'him, not him o'her."

They were within a few boat lengths of the pier where the broad full moon was shining brightly down on the wharf, making one part as light as day, and throwing the other into deep shadow. The steamboat was in her usual place, the gangway was still extended to the wharf, and busy people were passing and repassing. Lord Sydenhault's carriage and dog-cart were on the quay, and they could distinctly see a gentleman helping a lady to descend from the steps of the carriage while one or two servants stood around. Ethel was leaning over Ruby trying to make her speak or move, but all her efforts were equally futile; Ruby lay with closed eyes

just as she had been brought into the boat; she breathed, and once or twice sighed wearily, but she was either unconscious, or so weak as to be wholly unable to speak a word or make a sign.

On arriving at the quay, Herbert Sydney at once hurried to the wharf to ask for the use of the Sydenhault carriage, while the fishermen aided by two gentlemen from the steamboat who had seen there was trouble of some kind on board the little boat, and had come to their assistance, busied themselves in carrying the two girls from where they lay on the dripping sails.

Mr. Sydney in a few words told the Honorable Mr. Penryth the need Lord Seymore's daughter and her cousin had for the use of his carriage, the request was at once acceded to with a degree of courtesy which from the conversation he had been listening to among the fishermen, Herbert did not expect.

While talking to Mr. Penryth, Herbert's eye took in the group of figures in front of him, on either side and behind. An elderly lady whose eyes covered by cataract proclaimed her to be the blind Countess, leaned on the arm of Mr. Penryth; while she held her other son gently by the hand as if he were a boy who she feared might run away, the dreamy absent look in the latter's eyes telling that he was the mad Lord. What the fishermen had said, made Herbert Sydney regard him with an amount of interest he would not otherwise have felt; it was probably the expression of the young man's eye which first attracted Lord Sydenhault's notice, and

made him fancy the coatless and hatless lad some one he had seen and known.

No sooner had Mr. Penryth gone to give orders to the coachman as to the conveyance of the young ladies to their home, than Lord Sydenhault releasing himself from his mother's hold came up to Herbert, and putting one of his hands on each shoulder of the lad, looked earnestly into his eyes, not certainly with the air of an insane person, but rather with the manner of one who speaks in his sleep, saying as he did so, "Speak again, who are you? — Tell me your name?"

Herbert answered the soft kindly look of the dark brown eyes with a corresponding friendliness in his own as he replied to the last question.

"Herbert Sydney,"

"Herbert Sydney — Sydney — Herbert Sydney," said Lord Sydenhault in a half conscious dreamy sort of way, as if he was trying to bring something to his remembrance which eluded him like the shadowy fragments of a half forgotten dream.

Mr. Penryth had observed the attitude of his brother, although from the distance at which he stood it was not possible he could have heard the words he addressed to Herbert, and calling to the servant in an angry voice he said; "Brown! attend to your master. What do you mean by allowing my Lord to talk in that way to people on the wharf?"

The servant took Lord Sydenhault gently by the hand and led him to his mother, whose sightless eyes and

stretched out hand were already taking the direction of the spot where her son stood. Mr. Penryth came up hurriedly, and giving his arm to his mother, led his party, followed by the servants, towards the gangway of the vessel, giving a fierce contemptuous glance at the half clad dripping figure of Herbert as he passed.

The proud boy returned the glance of the proud man, by one of angry defiance.

One of those who helped to carry the dripping girls up the jetty steps, was an officer who had been spending a week or two with some friends in Sydenhault Oaks. He had frequently seen and admired Ethel Wolferstan, and endeavored without effect to obtain an introduction to her, and as he leaped into the boat, was surprised to see that the object of his admiration was one of those to whom he had come to render aid.

Ethel, with her marble face framed by the folds of dripping black hair which hung below her waist, was more beautiful by far than Ethel, as the officer had before seen her in a studied walking costume, and as he placed the lady on one of the cushions of Lord Sydenhaul'ts carriage, and arranged the wraps around her, he made up his mind to return to his friends in the little town upon the hills above, at least for another week.

Ethel had at once recognized the gentleman who lifted her so gently into the carriage as one she had seen more than once in church, and passing the castle gate, a place which generally formed an attraction to the girls, from the monotony of the lawns and garden inside. He was a handsome distinguished looking man, very superior in appearance to the retired annuitants, lawyers

and doctors who formed the male portion of society in Sydenhault Oaks, and it was with a feeling akin to pleasure that she heard him say to some one near him as he left the carriage, "Go quickly, Jones, and bring my traps from the steamboat, I will remain another week where I am."

CHAPTER VI.

HERBERT SYDNEY.

THE summer had passed, the short sunny days of autumn, that all enjoy with a sweet sorrow, because each soft mild day with its brown and golden leaves — its sheaves of rich grain standing midst the stubble — is bringing us nearer to stern winter, with his cold breath, snow storms, and icebound brooks, those mild grey sweet days of autumn, were fleeting all too soon.

Ethel Wolferstan was once more well and in buoyant spirits, exulting in the attentions of Colonel Ponsonby. The young man found a ready welcome at Seymore Castle from Colonel Wolferstan, for whom he left his card the morning after the accident, which enabled him to render assistance to the young lady whose acquaintance for weeks previous he had endeavoured in vain to make.

Colonel Wolferstan at once recognized in him the son of General Sir Alexander Ponsonby, his senior officer, under whom he had fought at Vittoria during the Peninsular war, hence he was welcomed for his father's sake as well as for his own.

Ethel fancied she owed the young officer a debt of gratitude for the aid he had afforded to the fisherman in bringing her up from the boat to the quay, and the sympathies of her parents took the same direction. The

young officer was now Ethel's accepted lover. Strange to say, she did not suffer much from the exposure to cold and wet she had endured during the time she had been with dripping garments on the rock, the waves breaking over her feet, and subsequently engulfed as she had been more than once in that wild sea. If she did not leave the precincts of the castle for a week, it was more in accordance with the wish of her medical attendant than from any real weakness.

How was it with Ruby? Many a week passed ere the almost lifeless form carried into the castle on that eventful night was able to be moved from her own apartments to the drawing-room. Summer had passed away ere she again trod the green sward, or gladdened Jasper's heart by walking among his garden plots.

During all the long, weary weeks in which it seemed uncertain whether Ruby would live or die, Herbert Sydney came every day to hear the sad response "no better," and to learn that the hitherto apathetic father was now, half frantic with grief, day and night by the bedside of his darling child. And when she began to sit up and watch Jasper at his work, he saw her once, only once among those quaint old parterres, Ruby held out both her pale hands towards him, and when he came beside her, she took one hand of his in both her own, and pressed it to her cheek and brow.

Ruby was very weak, and seeing Herbert Sydney whom she had last seen as he lifted her from out the watery column on St. Wolfgang's rock, made her heart fluttered like an imprisoned bird that beats [illegible] the bars of its cage; she could not speak, but she kept

his hand and pressed it between both her own, as if she would thus tell all that was passing in her heart, and turning her face up to his, she looked in his eyes with an expression of love true and deathless. Through good and ill, through storm or sunshine, o'er all the world that look went with him.

After this, Ruby saw Herbert Sydney no more, but that day in the garden, the truth came suddenly to her soul,—she loved him with a love that would fill her heart for evermore, and with this knowledge came a fearful looking forward to a dim and hopeless future.

She believed that Herbert Sydney's heart was in Ethel's keeping, a handful of violets gathered for Ruby, but given to Ethel because they were asked for, the ivory tablets also given to Ethel because of her expressed wish to obtain a set exactly similar, these precious things given into Ruby's keeping, lest Mrs. Wolferstan should see them among Ethel's 'white things,' told a tale to Ruby which made her feel that her love for Herbert Sydney, if betrayed, by word or sign, would be sin. She could not help loving him, but she would bury that love deep in her own bosom, and no one should ever know of its existence.

Many times during those weary weeks of convalescence when she had been left so much alone, her father being obliged to return to his duties in London, she wished to return to Ethel the faded violets,—the ivory tablets, given to her so many weeks before—but she saw so little of her cousin that it had remained undone. Now that the secret so long lying dormant in her heart was laid bare, she sought out Ethel, and putting the

little parcel containing the once treasured trifles into her hands, said:

"I ought to have given you these long ago, Ethel."

"What is this?" was the reply, as Ethel opened the tissue paper in which they were enfolded. At the first glance she smiled contemptuously, her face expressing no trouble — no regret, putting them down on the sofa on which they both were sitting, she continued:

"Oh! these love tokens of Mr. Sydney's, how ashamed I am I should have ever accepted them, ever kept them among my precious things. I hope the poor lad has forgotten that he ever had the assurance to give such to a pupil, particularly one in my rank of life."

Colonel Ponsonby's attention to Ethel had effectually cured her of her love for Herbert Sydney, which in reality was more a girlish fondness for admiration than anything else, but now that her eyes were opened to the evil which might have occurred to her through this imaginary passion, she determined, cost what it might, to save Ruby from a like folly. That night on the Saint's rock had shewn Herbert's secret to her but too plainly, and thinking over the past, her memory went back to the cast down eyes, the burning blushes of Ruby, which she more than feared revealed a dream that the heiress of Castle Seymore must be awakened from at any cost. Previous to that night on the rock, Ethel Wolferstan was a school girl, with all a school girl's romance, she was now a loving woman, loved by one in her own rank of life, and capable of discerning clearly the danger she had escaped, and to which Ruby was now exposed.

Ruby's thoughts burned on her cheek as she replied, "Ethel, do you recollect that you asked for these violets and admired the tablets, saying you should like to have a set like them?"

"I do remember perfectly, and I am ashamed to say I wished for these things because I believed myself beloved by Mr. Sydney, and fancied I returned his love. It was a silly dream, from each phase of which I have awakened. The night he came to save *you*, not *me*, on St. Wolfgang's rock, he would have taken you and left me to perish; bu that you insisted upon my being saved first. Afterwards, in the boat, all his attention was given to you, Ethel lay unheeded, while, on what seemed to others Ruby's dead body, was lavished all his care."

Ethel paused for a moment, and with crimsoned cheek and flashing eye, continued,—

"When we were brought to the quay, and afterwards to our home, I, shivering with cold, every feeling keenly alive, was left to the care of strangers; you with the hue of death on your face, without motion or apparent life, Herbert Sydney would permit no one to touch but himself. It was well for me all this happened, in any event, it saved me from great trouble,— great folly. In the first place,

> 'She who can love unloved again,
> Hath better store of love than brain;
> I'll keep my love my debts to pay,
> While unthrifts fool their love away!'

"In the next place," continued she, "had I not been mistaken in believing myself the object of the young man's admiration," (Ethel uttered the last word with a

contemptuous emphasis, accompanied with a curl of the upper lip, which implied more bitter things than even her words,) "our courtship, if it had proceeded so far as to deserve the name, could only have been productive of evil to both, nothing but my youth and inexperience could excuse my romantic fancy for one in his position. Under any circumstances he is very greatly to blame; it is fortunately all past, I have not seen him since that terrible night, I hope we shall never meet again."

Ruby was bewildered, she knew not what to make of all this, confined by weakness almost entirely to her own apartment, with the companionship of Miss Crompton and attended by Monica, she had heard and seen nothing of Colonel Ponsonby save as a gentleman who had helped to carry Ethel to the carriage from the boat, and who had continued to visit the family in consequence of his being the son of an old friend of Colonel Wolferstan; thus the change in Ethel's feelings seemed to her almost miraculous.

"I want to say a few more words to you Ruby, and then I hope what I consider my thoughtless conduct in allowing myself to be attracted by one of such inferior rank, will be a subject we shall never speak of again. When I spoke of Mr. Sydney trying to save you first, I did not mean you to understand that he loved you, only that he wished to save you who are the heiress of Seymore castle. It was natural enough, the gratitude of your father would be unbounded, and might serve to raise him from his present position. That his ambition is great enough for anything, we know, although, from the coldness you have always shewn towards him, he could have

no hope of making an impression on your heart, as he almost succeeded in doing on mine."

Many weeks passed away, Herbert Sydney came no more, but, from her aunt, Ruby learned that Lord Seymore had written a letter to Herbert enclosing a large sum of money, as a reward for the service which had been rendered to himself through his child and her cousin. The money was returned with these words, "Mr. Sydney has already received a richer reward than any Lord Seymore can offer."

"Dear aunt Wolferstan, how could papa be so cruel as to offer Mr. Sydney money for risking his life to save mine?"

"Foolish child, your father owed him a large debt of gratitude, the young man presumed on this, and used to come every day to the house to ask for you, it might have ended at last in his presuming to address you; these sort of people never know where to stop, and to prevent any such undesirable audacity, Lord Seymore requested him to discontinue his visits to the castle.

Ruby was still weak and ill then, too much so to support the contending emotions excited by what she had heard. She had been taught by Sydney to value above all things else, whatever was noble, generous, good and true, and she knew *he* was all he wished to make her. Hours afterwards, folding her pale hands together in the solitude of her chamber she, exclaimed aloud:

"Oh that I were a peasant girl, and that Herbert Sydney loved me!"

Ruby's tell-tale cheek and brow would have told Mrs. Wolferstan the story of her feelings towards Herbert

Sydney, even if she had not from a few hints dropped on purpose by Ethel, been watching for such signs, and she was not long in communicating her suspicion to Lord Seymore, impressing upon him the necessity of removing Ruby from the castle at least for a time. In reply to her letter her brother himself arrived, and after a lengthened conversation with his sister, announced his intention of taking Ruby to reside with him in London, giving as his reason the superior advantages she could obtain there from masters in every branch of her education.

Ruby, who a year ago would have hailed with delight the idea of going to London, to see and hear the sights and sounds which she had heard described so vividly by both her aunt and Miss Crompton, now, listened to her father's words as if they contained the sentence of banishment from all she most loved. Her aunt, Ethel, the servants, particularly Monica and Jasper, the house-dog, her pony, the trees in the rookery, the grass on the lawn, the pillars of the portico, the park-gate, the garden wall, every animate and inanimate thing by which she had been surrounded from infancy, became at once inexpressibly dear.

There was another dearer than all, whom she must leave behind, without a word or sign to tell him how differently she felt from all around her. How, if she could, she would have thrown the gold her father offered him, into the deep sea from which he had rescued her.

It was early morn, the clock struck six, Ruby had been up and dressed for hours, she could not rest; it was her last day at Sydenhault Oaks,— in Seymore Castle,— she

would not return for years, perhaps never; the very thought gave her a sickening heart pang.

"I must go and visit all the old places once more," thought she, and putting on her hat and shawl, she was soon amid the quaint garden beds with their old fashioned Spring flowers. Jasper came towards her, a small bouquet of lily of the valley in his hand.

"Is that for me, Jasper?"

"Well ye'll, get it if ye like. I did'na think ye would be so soon out, the sun is not strong yet and the mornings are cold: I have roses for you in the green house, I was going to bring this to poor Mr. Sydney, he is very low."

"What do you mean Jasper, is Mr. Sydney ill?"

"Did you no hear that afore?" said the gardener in a tone of surprise, "he's been sick for many a long day, last week they would na' let anybody see him. I may gie ye the flowers, maybe he's dead now, or so low that he would 'na heed them."

Ruby almost snatched the flowers from Jasper's hand, and fled down through the broad green garden walks out by the postern gate, on the road leading to the upper town, ere the old man had recovered from his surprise.

"I have made a bad morning's work, I fear," said Jasper, as he watched from the postern door to which he had followed her, Ruby's slight figure almost flying along the road leading to the upper town, "its my thought she would rather yon bonny lad that's dying, in the grey stone house up there, than all the fine folks she'll ever meet in London. If my Lord gets wit she's been there, and who telled her the lad was sick, it'll cost me my

place, an it winna be easy for me to work for another, now at I've been thirty years my own master at Seymore Castle."

Ruby gave a slight tap with the muffled knocker on the door of the house Ethel had pointed out to her, (on the evening that now seemed so long ago), as the one in which Herbert Sydney lived, the door was almost instantly opened by a tidy young girl in a snow white cap and apron.

"Is Mrs. Sydney at home?—is Mr. Sydney better?—I mean is Mrs. Sydney up yet?" said Ruby hurriedly, scarcely knowing what she said.

"Yes Ma'am, she's up long ago, and Mr. Sydney is much better. Will you come in?"

Ruby was shewn into a parlor, the walls of which, agitated as she was, she could not help observing, were covered with paintings that seemed to be the work of Italian artists; the whole room bearing the unmistakeable impress that it was the residence of persons in the same rank of life as herself, although circumstances obliged them to live in this small grey stone house.

A lady dressed in black, whom Ruby knew to be Herbert's mother, entered from an inner apartment, closing the door noiselessly after her, and approached Ruby with a smile she could not have worn if her son were in danger of death.

"I came to ask how Mr. Sydney is, and brought him those flowers, I am going away at ten o'clock, and oh! I wish so much to see him," said Ruby standing up, speaking nervously and clasping her hands together with the flowers held between them.

"Sit down, my child," replied Mrs. Sydney, you seem agitated; Herbert is much better, but scarcely in a fit state to see any one. May I ask your name? One of his pupils I presume, so many come to ask for him that I am occasionally unable to remember the names I should wish most to recollect."

"I am Ruby Seymore, I never came before, but oh! I do wish so to see him just once."

The clasped hands were raised as she spoke, the violet eyes looking so pleadingly and with such a piteous expression into the lady's eyes, the fair face so wan and wax-like, was eloquence itself. Mrs. Sydney was won as all others were by the beautiful eyes.

"Compose yourself, Miss Seymore, I will take the flowers to Herbert, I know he will prize them. I cannot promise that you shall see him, he has been very ill — ill nigh unto death, and this is the first time he has left his bed for weeks. During the last few days he has been improving, and this morning he begged so hard to put on his dressing gown and be wheeled into the sitting room, that I consented; you can understand how important it is that he should see no one except his attendants and myself, I only yielded to his moving at this early hour because of his restlessness, and seeing a stranger, would be sure to increase it."

Ruby did not understand; she knew that every day from the one on which she saw Herbert Sydney among the flower beds, she grew better, it seemed as if she had drunk new life from his words, from his touch, and a feeling, she would not acknowledge even to herself, arose in her heart, saying, "It may be so with him, were

I to touch him once, he might feel my touch giving him life, as his touch once gave life to me.

Mrs. Sydney took the flowers from Ruby's hands, and going into the inner room, returned in a second or two as noiselessly as she had at first entered, this time however leaving the door opened.

Ruby stood watching every motion of Mrs. Sydney's figure, each expression of her face as she came forward, with an intensity of feeling in her dark eyes and crimson lips that said more to forward her cause than any spoken words could do.

"My son is fast asleep, come with me, you shall see him and place the flowers yourself in his lap, he will see them immediately on awaking, and shall be told who brought them."

Ruby followed Mrs. Sydney into the inner room, one exactly like the first. A low fire was in the grate, in front of which sat Herbert Sydney asleep in a reclining chair, the light coming in softened through thin green silk blinds over which the lace window curtains fell in light drapery to the floor. His head lay on the back of the chair, its healthy olive hue almost turned to white, the blue veins distinctly to be seen in his forehead from which his brown hair had been pushed back.

Ruby stood close to his chair looking down on the pallid face, to which the only relief was afforded by the dark eye-lashes that lay like a thick fringe on his marble cheek. Herbert Sydney had himself taught her of the wondrous power we sometimes hear ascribed to magnetism, and a feeling possessed her, as if by her touch she could heal him. The impulse to take one of his thin

white hands in her own, was almost irresistible. Raising her eyes to Mrs. Sydney's face she was about to whisper a request to be allowed to do so, when a loud voice speaking at the hall door, replied to by vehement whispers as if of one trying to enforce silence, struck with a harsh jarring noise on the ear amid the hush and quiet of the sick room. Mrs. Sydney motioned Ruby to remain beside the invalid, and leaving the room, softly shut the door.

Without an instant given to thought, Ruby leant down over the face of the sleeping lad and pressed her warm full lips to his thin wan cheek.

"Ruby, darling Ruby!" in a moment the boy's arms were around her neck keeping her face down to his own.

"Ruby! it was my guardian angel who sent you here, I can die now. I have wanted so much all these weary months to tell you how I have loved you, better far than my own life," the feeble lad here stopped, exhausted.

"I too love you better than any one in the world," replied Ruby, her eyes telling him that her words were truth itself, "papa came yesterday to take me away with him to London, I did so wish every day of this long winter to see you, and when Jasper told me this morning that you were ill, nothing could keep me from coming."

The faintness passed off, he took both her hands in his. "Ruby, if I die, I will love you when I lie in my grave, will you sometimes come there, and sit upon the green sod which covers me?"

"If you die,— I will sit and weep beside your grave,— till I am blind,— until they lay me down in the earth—

by your side." Ruby spoke these detached sentences in subdued tones; her voice choked with sobs impossible to suppress.

The boy drew her face down to his own; and pressed his lips to her soft cheek, he seemed to have drawn new life from her fresh young face, he felt strong and well again, and his voice sounded clear as it did in the old time as he answered, "Ruby, if I live, for your dear sake, I will make myself a name as honoured as the one your father was born to, I will win money to place you in a home as grand as Seymore Castle. If I do this, will you be my wife? Will you give me ten years of grace, ten years in which to win a name that will warrant me in seeking you for my wife? Ruby, are you willing to wait for me ten years?

"I will wait for you, all the years, all the days of my life."

"No, Ruby! If at the end of ten years I do not come to claim your hand, be sure that I am sleeping in some distant grave, alive or dead, my love for you will be as fresh then as now, if the dead are permitted to revisit this earth I will never be far from you, and if not, in my far away spirit home I will never cease to think of you, no change can make me resign the love, which since I knew it, has made all the music of my life. I never feel the fresh breeze fan my cheek, see the daisy blossom, or hear the linnet sing, that my heart has not revealings of you in your castle home. Merely putting off the flesh cannot change all this, it has become my very being. If ten years pass and I do not come, believe that I am watching you from those blue heavens, and that my

spirit freed from earthly dross, will love for your dear sake, those who form your happiness. Ruby, you will wait?"

"When I am free to do as my heart desires, I promise you by the honour of a Seymore I will marry you; I will wait for you all the years of my life."

"Darling Ruby, I will trust to your honour. When I have accomplished all I say, I will claim you from your father, — until then"—

The door opened — Mrs. Sydney entered;

"You are awake, Herbert, I hope you have not been exerting yourself."

"If I have, my dear mother, I feel better than I have felt for months past."

Half an hour later, Ruby sat in her own chamber, thinking with flushed cheek and beating heart of all that had passed in the previous hour, and wondering at the change which had been wrought in herself.

At six o'clock that morning she was languid, wavering, infirm of purpose; now she possessed a will and heart so strong she knew they could not fail her.

CHAPTER VII.

NATHAN THE SEEKER.

THE way he had come was long and weary. It was late, the night was dark and cold, and, although the traveller was hardly past middle age, yet he was well nigh exhausted as he approached the walls of old Grenada, searching amid the darkness for the Vega gate, the one at which he knew he could at once gain admittance. Its guardian was always a Hebrew, not known to be a Hebrew, it is true, by the Spaniards, in whose hands his appointment lay, yet nevertheless most surely a Hebrew of the Hebrews.

Ever since the expulsion of the Jews under Ferdinand and Isabella from their beloved city of Grenada, no less dear to them than to the Moors who left the beautiful Alhambra, an undying monument of their abode there, the Hebrew has silently but surely been re-gaining his foothold in the city of Grenada, establishing there an abiding place. He builds no house for himself in the land of the stranger, save one in which to worship the God, who to them alone of all the tribes of the earth, hath manifested Himself by a visible presence. But the Hebrew hath in Grenada great store of gold, and precious stones of almost fabulous value, parchments which the wisest scribe among the Gentile nations cannot read; parchments priceless to the children of the

promise. All,— gold, and gems, and sacred writings, stored in secret places where none but the initiated can find them, kept in safe guardianship until the day, so long promised, shall break in the East, its light shine even unto the uttermost ends of the Earth, and the command shall go forth, — "Israel shall return to their beloved land, and the Lord will once more be the strength of His people." "Egypt shall be a desolation,— Edom a wilderness,— but Judah shall dwell forever, Jerusalem from generation to generation; the Hebrew shall dwell before the Lord in Zion!"

The Vega gate is reached, the sign is given to its Hebrew guardian that tells him one of his own people is without, in the darkness and the cold. The ponderous key is turned in the lock, the heavy iron bolts withdrawn.

"Enter, my Brother, peace be unto thee," are the words the traveller hears as he enters among the abodes of men. He replies with solemn air,

"The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob bless thee."

"Whence comest thou?"

"From distant Britain."

"Rest thee, I pray, my Brother, and let me wash thy feet, and give thee to eat a savory morsel such as is not often within this poor house to offer."

"Nay, my Brother, time presses, I must be with the Rabbi Abraham long ere the day dawns. Fare-thee-well."

"Fare-thee-well," responded the guardian of the Vega gate, as he looked after the retreating figure of the traveller which was soon lost in the darkness of the silent street, the lamps which were meant to light it being placed at such a distance from each other, and the light

they emitted so faint, that they only served to deepen the gloom, as the light of the glow-worm in the swamp or forest.

"If my eyes deceive me not, that man is NATHAN THE SEEKER; it is twenty years since he was here last, I wonder how he has sped; no doubt like all his predecessors heard nothing of the stone; while we poor men must give of our substance to support him." So soliloquized David, the keeper of the Vega gate, as he replaced its heavy bars, and sought the shelter of the gate house.

The traveller walked on with slow and weary step, he was sure of his way now, but the streets were rough and harder to tread than the country roads outside the gate, and the man was footsore and worn with long walking. He had still a long line of streets to traverse ere he could reach the residence of the Rabbi Abraham which he sought. He had been once in Grenada before, then only for a day and night, once only at the house of the Rabbi; then he had found the place by the written directions he had with him now; then, as now, he had been strictly forbidden to ask his way or to tell to any man save one of his own Tribe (with whom it was scarcely possible he could meet) that the Rabbi Abraham dwelt in the city of Grenada.

He could not consult his directions, the night was too dark, and just under the lamps where he could see, he would have to brave the chance of encountering one of the sentinels who were always to be found when their services were not wanted, and were never within hearing when there was robbery or murder abroad. Should his

written directions be seen by one of these men he would be arrested as an instigator of revolt, and his (to Gentile eyes) unreadable itinerary, construed into rebellious documents, conniving at, or plotting, the assassination of some one in power.

He had conned his lesson well several times during the past week, and he had his own recollection of the road he had traversed twenty years before to aid him now; hence there would be little difficulty if any, in finding the house he sought in the streets of Grenada. The cities of Spain have lagged sadly behind those of other European countries in the wonderful march of progress which has distinguished the nineteenth century; and have undergone little or no change, either in the disposition of their streets, or in the architecture of their buildings, for the last three hundred years. He was now in the street belonging to the Rabbi; yes, every house in that street by whatsoever name its owner was known belonged by mortgage to the Jewish Rabbi, and their inhabitants could be turned out, and the houses themselves razed to the ground at his word. Wondrous power,—unseen,— unknown, like the snow falling silently to the earth, yet covering with a thick mantle every flower and herb it falleth on, so doth the power of the Hebrew extend over half the city of Grenada.

He had counted three tens of houses the Rabbi's house should be the seventh house of the fourth ten. Ha! there is the door with the sign upon it, known to every Hebrew, unnoticed by, unknown to the Gentile. A single rap sufficeth even at this late hour to bring a ready response.

"Who knocks so late?" is asked in the Spanish tongue.

The answer is given by one word in Hebrew. There are bolts to be withdrawn, and locks to be opened in the Rabbi's house, as at the Vega Gate, both are done and the traveller is admitted into a dingy half lit vestibule, lofty and wide, but unfurnished save by a great clock, the brass pendulum of which sways backwards and forwards, its broad moonlike face gleaming through the glass door of the case, a table on which lay several parcels, and a large leather covered arm-chair, where sat a porter day and night, relieved, like a sentinel, twice in the twenty-four hours.

The traveller sat down in the leather chair, drawing a deep breath as he did so, he closed his eyes for a second or two, and remained silent, an outstretched hand on each knee, his whole figure and bearing betokening the fatigue he felt.

"You are worn out, you need sleep and rest," said the porter, "come with me I will shew you where you can repose your wearied limbs and wash your waysore feet."

"Nay," replied the traveller, "I must do neither until I have seen the Rabbi, and delivered to him my errand. Is he abed?"

"He is not abed, but I doubt much your seeing him to-night, the Rabbi sees no one, be they lord or hind, after the clock has told the tenth hour, it is now almost midnight," said the porter pointing to the large steel face of the clock as he spoke.

"I am neither lord nor hind, prince nor peasant, but the Rabbi Abraham will see me," replied the traveller

taking from his finger as he spoke a thick copper ring, on the flat top of which were engraved some characters in ancient Hebrew, which he gave to the porter, desiring him to carry it to the Rabbi.

The man took the ring, the characters engraved on the top of which he vainly tried to decipher.

"What words are these?" inquired he, holding the ring up to the dim lamp which hung on the wall beside the clock, and knitting his brows as if it were the poorness of the light which prevented him from reading the Hebrew words.

"If I know I may not tell," replied the traveller, "the Rabbi Abraham knows such things well, when you give him the ring, you can ask him their meaning."

The porter turned and looked at the stranger's face, as if stirred by some feeling made up of surprise and indignation.

"Do you think me mad?" inquired he, "You have never spoken to the Rabbi Abraham, never seen him, or you would not give me such counsel, you had better keep your old copper ring until to-morrow, and present it to the Rabbi yourself, it is too late for me to disturb him to-night."

"Late as it is you must give him that ring, if you delay doing so till the morrow it may cost you your place, you need say nothing, only lay the ring on the table beside him and await his orders, he will tell you, I doubt not, to shew me at once into his presence."

"Well," with a cynical smile, "to cure your presumption, I will take the ring and lay it by the Rabbi's book as he reads, he will look me in the face and say nothing,

his look will mean, 'begone, trouble me not,' I will obey and come back to tell you that you must wait until to-morrow's sun lights up the sky before you can see or speak to the Rabbi Abraham. I do not believe there's a man in Europe he would see at this late hour unless, indeed, it were 'NATHAN THE SEEKER,' and I hope you don't pretend to be he."

"I pretend to nothing, I pray thee do mine errand," said the traveller wearily, closing his eyes and leaning back in the leather chair as he had done at his entrance.

The porter took the ring, and going up two flights of dimly lighted stairs to the Rabbi's study, tapped lightly on the door, and entering, without waiting for a command to do so, advanced to where the Rabbi Abraham sat at a table covered with scarlet cloth, reading a long roll of time-stained manuscript, three wax tapers in silver stands being placed at each side of the parchment. The Rabbi did not appear to notice the entrance of the porter, and it was only when the latter laid the ring on the scarlet cloth beside the parchment, that the High Priest seemed aware of his presence. Immediately as his eyes fell on the ring, he lifted it up, exclaiming in more hurried tones than he was wont to use;

"Where did you get this?—Who gave it you?—Where is the man who brought it?"

The porter was completely taken aback; in his ten years service he had never until now seen the Rabbi's eye flash as it did, had never heard him speak but in slow measured tones.

"The man is in the vestibule, and"—

Before the porter could finish the sentence, the Rabbi

had taken one of the lighted tapers from the table, and was gone from the room, downstairs, on his way to the travel-soiled stranger.

The man stared after his master in mute surprise; recovering himself quickly however, prompted by a stronger feeling, a feeling of curiosity to know who the stranger could be, who, coming to the house in the night, meanly dressed, without attendants or even a mule, could so move the Rabbi by the mere sight of the copper ring he wore, as to make him act in a way contrary to all the precedent of the ten past years.

The tall commanding figure of the High Priest, his black flowing robe, the small velvet cap keeping down rather than covering the silver gray locks which fell in soft wavy folds on his neck, his long white beard,— the lighted taper in his hand as he descended the staircase, formed a picture, such as had not met the traveller's eye since he left Grenada twenty years before. He rose to meet the Rabbi; the latter, putting the taper on the table, clasped the traveller to his bosom, as he exclaimed with inexpressible emotion,

"Nathan, my Brother Nathan."

For a few minutes neither spoke. The traveller, among his own people, and hearing his own name, for the first time for twenty years, pronounced with such manifest affection by one who, before Nathan was born, had gained the reverence of all his people, the highest honor they had to bestow; sobbed aloud;

"My father, give me thy blessing!"

The Rabbi raised himself up to his full height.

"My son hast thou brought me tidings of the 'Stone?'"

"Yea, good tidings. The time is not far distant when it will pass into the hands of a woman; she is now in her twentieth year."

"You know then where the 'Stone' is, who is its possessor?"

"I do, my Father, I have sat and talked with the man who has it, as a man speaketh to his friend."

The Hebrew High Priest raised his hands and eyes to Heaven, his lips moved in silent prayer for a second or two, and then laying his hands on the head of Nathan with his eyes still raised, he said in low deep measured tones;

"The Lord God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob bless thee, God give thee of the dew of Heaven, of the fullness of the earth, of corn and of wine."

The blessing was given; Nathan knelt in silent prayer, the High Priest stood with hands and eyes raised to Heaven, his soul lifted up in praise to the God of Israel, —to Him whom the Rabbi Abraham and his fathers have served from the beginning of time, from generation, to generation.

The porter stood in silent awe until the men whom he considered as the holy of the earth had each finished his devotions, wondering to himself at what he had that night seen and heard.

"Go," said the Rabbi, addressing the porter, "and arouse the young men," bid one of them prepare a bath and fresh raiment; another, the guest chamber which the Rabbi Micha occupies when he honors Grenada with his presence; another to spread a table in my sitting

room, with the choicest viands and wine the house affords."

"Nay, my Father," said the traveller "there must be no food spread for me until morning at the seventh hour; I am a Pharisee and have a vow; I break not my fast before that time; I shall then have fasted forty hours, the last twelve of which I have passed without rest, that I might see my Lord and receive the blessing ere the first hour of the day. I have seen thy face, the blessing is mine."

Pointing to the broad disk of the clock which now shewed the hour to be past one in the morning, he continued, "Lo! the new day has already begun to run its course, yesterday has gone, with the joys and sorrows men have borne through it, to aid in filling the number, which shall make up time."

Ere Nathan ceased speaking, two young men were in attendance.

"Go, my son," said the Rabbi, "wash and rest, at the seventh hour we will break our fast together. I will then hear what thou hast to tell me of the 'Stone.' May the angel Raphael guard thy pillow."

Nathan made a low obeisance to the High Priest, and following the young men, was conducted to a bath around which were spread all the luxuries of the East, the bath itself of the choicest porcelain, filled with filtered rose water; the air heavy with perfume.

His bath over, the traveller arrayed in a soft white night-dress of the wool of Cashmere, was led to a large and lofty bed-chamber, such as he, accustomed as he was to visit the richest men in Europe, had never before en-

tered. A bed of ivory inlaid with gold, the purple velvet canopy and curtains of which were fringed and looped with the same precious metal, occupied the centre of the room. At one end, the wall was covered with pictures of enormous value by the first Italian masters; cabinets from China and India filled with curiosities in gold and gems, together with rare sculpture, soft fauteuils and ottomans, a velvet carpet in which the foot sunk, and costly mirrors, made up the rest of the luxury around. While over all fell in soft rays the light from wax tapers, placed in a gold chandelier, shaded by rose colored porcelain globes, the pendants and knotted crystal cords of which gave back the soft rays from their thousand facets. Soft eider down quilts of white satin, bed linen of cob-web like cambric, helped to complete the couch, on which reposed the wearied limbs of the wayfarer, that a few hours before were battling with the cold wind on the bare hills of Spain.

When the traveller arose next morning and surveyed his strong athletic form and sunbrowned face, in one of the mirrors of his chamber, he could not help asking himself;

"Is this the same worn-out bent old man I saw in the peasant's door glass last night ten miles from the city of Grenada? — I have seen the Rabbi,— received my reward for twenty years hard service in the cause of our nation, — the blessing is mine, — my body has been refreshed by water and rest, the worn way-faring man seeking shelter for the night has become once more, 'NATHAN THE SEEKER.'"

"Peace be unto thee, Nathan, my son," was the saluta-

tion of the Rabbi as the traveller entered the breakfast room at the appointed hour.

Nathan answered suitably, and the attendants busied themselves in serving breakfast, which in its appointments and manner of serving, accorded with the chamber in which the traveller had slept. Not-withstanding his long fast, Nathan ate sparingly, confining himself amid the delicacies by which he was surrounded, to coffee, toasted bread, and goat's-milk cheese. The meal over, they adjourned to the apartment where we first saw the Rabbi. Seated there, the traveller unbidden commenced his narrative,

"You will be surprised to learn that for ten years I have known by whom the 'Stone' is held in possession; you will think I ought at once, on making the important discovery, have come to tell the glad tidings, and I should have done so, but that I was in hopes from year to year, to be able to bring the precious gem with me; and to place it in your hands. How often during those ten years, have I pleased myself by fancying the glad expression which would light up your countenance, as your eye fell for the first time on the words engraved by the Angel's pen; words, which so many of our tribe know so well, and yet have never seen; words, which even now when we know where to find the gem, the present generation may pass from earth without beholding. According to my instructions, I proceeded first to Rome, where, assuming the monastic habit, I soon, through my knowledge of Eastern languages, and my intimate acquaintance with our own tongue and holy writings, obtained a position in the Vatican. This at once put it in

my power to search for some sign, by word or otherwise, from which I could discover if the 'Stone' had become the property of the Catholic Church.

My search was useless, I laboured day and night, allowing myself only four hours of sleep, that I might in some favored hour fall upon the manuscript which would teach me where the Relic lay. I knew that if it had once fallen into the hands of the Roman Pontiff, it would be placed in safe keeping. My labour was in vain; after ten years spent in this way I knew that all my work in Rome had been, like that of my brethren employed in the same cause for over eleven centuries, even as water spilt on the ground.

Arrived at this conclusion, according to the itinerary given me I bent my steps to England, determined if need be, for the next ten years to spend my time in examining the archives contained in Westminster Abbey, the Tower of London, the Record Office, in short, wherever old manuscripts were to be found. By the help of our brother, Baron de Schwartzkind, I obtained leave to examine the parchments belonging to the capitular body of Westminster Abbey, where I had decided my first search in England should be made. The Angel Raphael must surely have accompanied me to England, even as he went with Tobias to Rages. For months my labour availed me nothing, and I was about giving up the search as hopeless, when one morning, among a parcel of useless rubbish, relating to the expenses of an old monastery, appeared the parchment I had sought in vain for so many years. A manuscript in the peculiar Latin of the old Saxons, written by a monk called Wolfgang,

in which he gives a vivid description of the 'Stone' as it was found upon the dead body of a priest of Rome called Paul; then follows an extract taken from an older manuscript, also describing the 'Stone,' and giving the Hebrew legend written by the Angel, the whole signed by Wolfgang, the Abbot above mentioned. Attached to the manuscript is one of later date, but written by the same scribe, stating that, on the night of the day on which the 'Stone' was found, it was carried by the Abbot Wolfgang, to the Queen of Sebert, then King of Essex, thus fulfilling the first part of the prophecy, "It came with a woman." With the help of the Angel it may be my fortune to fulfil the last part, "It must go with a woman!"

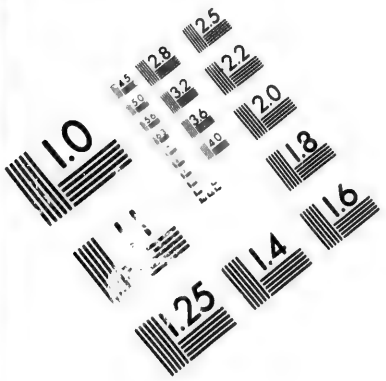
As he finished speaking Nathan laid the copy he had made from the parchment before the Rabbi, which the latter carefully examined.

"Yes," said the High Priest, still holding the document in his hand and examining it, "this is certainly a faithful copy of the Hebrew manuscript; this is a description of the 'Stone' by one who must have looked upon it while he wrote."

"How could the 'Stone' have fallen into the hands of Paul, a Christian and a priest?" asked Nathan.

The thin cheek of the Rabbi crimsoned, and his eye flashed as if with both anger and shame, while he answered. "Paul must have been Abraham of Athens, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, the learned man of his Tribe,—whom all Israel held in reverence,—who chose earth for his portion and the Nazarene for his God! Abraham of Athens was descended in a direct line from Tobias;





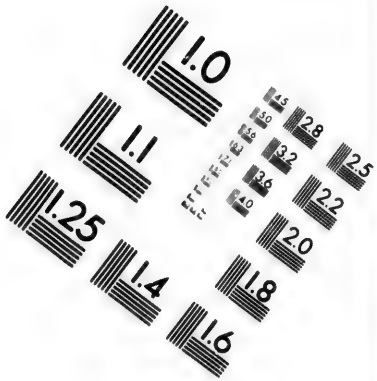
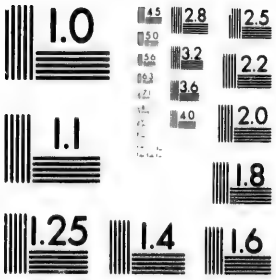
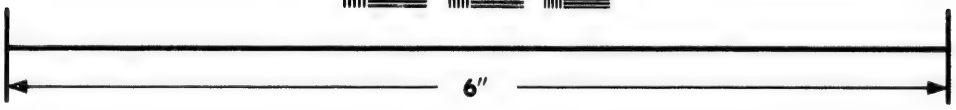
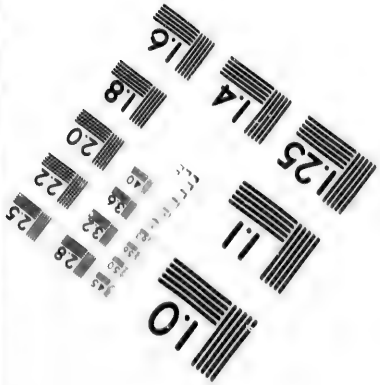
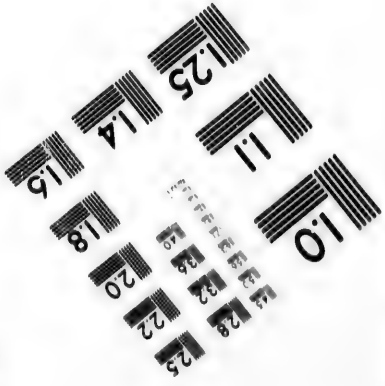


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if it is as I think, then is the mystery of the 'Stone's' disappearance solved. I pray thee proceed with thy narrative."

"What I had now to do was to find the descendants of Sebert, King of Essex, to whom the 'Stone' was given; this I feared would prove another stumbling block in the line of search. At the Norman conquest of Britain not many of the old Saxon families were allowed to hold their own; few now remain who are able to trace their descent from the old Saxons; but among these are the Seymores of Seymore Castle, who by a wise submission to the power of William, and a transformation of their name from Sebert to the Norman, one of Seymore, saved their lands and gold from the conqueror's grasp. That the possession of the 'Stone' was the mystic cause of this, there can be no doubt. When I had traced the family, I set myself to work to discover if any tradition pointed to their possession of the 'Stone,' or if it had passed from their hands in time of need, sold as a bauble for its supposed worth in gold. I early found that the family had never been poor, but that the estate they now possess, was only a tithe of the lands they held in the old Saxon time. I also found that until the present representative of the family became Lord of Seymore, there had been an unbroken line of sons, born to the house, but that the first and only child of the present lord was a daughter! to that daughter the 'Stone' must go!"

"I am not sure that must follow," said the Rabbi. "The mere fact of her being born heir, may be sufficient to fulfil the prophecy, 'It must go with a woman.' I will

study this well, it may mean because of a woman. How did you find out that the 'Stone' is still in their hands?"

"This was the most difficult point to ascertain, and cost me ten years of time, labour and thought. I at first tried to get an introduction to the Baron; this was not accomplished without considerable trouble, he was a man who since the death of his wife, ten years previous to my going to England, had shut himself up entirely from the world, I found it impossible in any way to gain a footing in his family, he would cultivate the acquaintance of no one. I could see no more of him, than I saw during the time occupied by him in reading the introductory letter I presented to him. His reception of me was courteous, that was all, his eye and bearing after a little time told me plainly, my presence was obtrusive. Among the neighbouring gentry I found out, that there was in the Seymore family, what they denominated a talisman, a precious jewel, which was believed to hold a magic influence in saving the wearer from evil. I found one old man who had been favoured by obtaining a sight of this talisman, and who described it exactly as I should expect an unlearned man to describe the 'Stone.' It was shewn to him by the father of the present Baron, upwards of fifty years ago on the occasion of his son Godfrey's birth. I was at my wit's end. I had been occupied for years finding out what I have now told you, when one day I fell in with one of our Tribe who is in high power in England, I entrusted him with the secret, told him I was 'The Seeker,' and of my success, adding, "There it must stop, I cannot by any means gain admittance to this man."

"Have patience," said he, "I will find out a way by which you will be associated together."

"How is this possible?" I inquired. "No money could tempt the melancholy man who lives in the past, to leave his old castle and mix among other men."

"What money cannot do, power may, aided by the ambition inherent in the breast of every Englishman," replied my friend.

"He argued rightly, he knew the weak points of the race among whom he was born and bred. Six years ago I was appointed one of the keepers of the records in the Tower of London, a month afterwards an old and palsied man, high in office died, and Lord Seymore was appointed in his place. At first he was very unapproachable, but 'constant dropping weareth away stone,' so it was with Lord Seymore, it took four years to establish an intimacy with him, but I conquered at last. He would fain be a chemist; what was wonder and mystery to him, was child's play to me, in England the science is yet in its infancy, its early morning; in Paris and Germany where I studied, it has attained to at least its noon-day. I shewed him the solution of marvels, which he had considered himself as incapable of attaining,— the gulf is spanned, we are firm friends. I told him the story of the 'Stone' down to its falling into the hands of the Gentile Queen. He heard me with an appearance of interest, his face betraying that it was not for the first time. I told him of the prophecy, his agitation would have been visible to a child, great drops of sweat stood on his brow and around his mouth, as if he had travelled fast and far on a sunny

day in June. I needed no more, I knew Lord Seymore possessed the 'Raphael Stone.'

"And now," said the Rabbi, "how is it to be obtained?"

"That it will never be got from Lord Seymore I am certain. He does not wear it, that I have ascertained beyond doubt; that he knows its value, and will preserve it as sacredly as he preserves his honor, I am as sure of, as if it were written on the tables of stone God gave unto Moses on Sinai. All that can now be done is to wait until the appointed time is come, when it will pass into the hands of a woman. Lord Seymore is at least fifty years old, in fifty more, at most, it must be his daughter's,— the 'Stone' will be ours,— the prophecy fulfilled. I grieve that it should take so long, if it is so, I must forego the honor of bringing it to my Tribe, I shall long ere then have been gathered to my fathers."

"Not every one who runneth gaineth the goal, but he who persevereth to the end. Your work is half done my son, this is the first time for more than a thousand years that we have known where the 'Stone' is, we must not wait for the fulfillment of a prophecy, which it may be, we do not understand, by the time Lord Seymore is gathered to his fathers he may have a grand-son, his daughter dead, where will the prophecy then be? No, we live in the present, here in the present is our duty. In whatever way the 'Stone' is found, and from whom it is taken, the prophecy standeth fast and sure, we leave the fulfilment of it to a Higher power."

"My father, I have been long convinced that any attempt to possess the 'Stone' in the Tower of London

will be futile. Every wall in the whole building has been a silent witness of cruelty and of bloodshed. It is stained with the blood of women, with the blood of children, the blood of the Kings and Queens of the Gentile, their lords, priests, and people. To such a place the Prince of the Power of the Air has full access, naught can debar his entrance. He who disputed with the Archangel Michael for the body of Moses will not permit such an one as I to recover the 'Holy Stone' in that place of blood!"

The High Priest smiled, "Does my brother Nathan believe Satan to be stronger than Israel's God?"

"Nay, my Lord, but we know that he and his angels are permitted power on this earth that the children of disobedience may be punished."

"Satan and his angels have no power at all unless it be given them, it will never be given them to harm thee. My son, go in peace,— keep thy vow,— fulfil thy mission; — it hath been told me in a dream that by thy hand will the 'Stone' be recovered. The God of thy fathers be with thee. Farewell."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE month of May seemed somehow to have an influence on the life of Ruby Seymore; it was in May she was born, and in May her mother died. In May her father left her at the age of fourteen, before he went, rivetting on her neck the chain to which was appended the 'Holy Stone.'

In May she was for hours face to face with death, part of the time under the waves of the sea.

In May she first listened to the sweet words her girl heart loved so well to hear, which told her, she was the dearest object earth held to one she loved as the best and bravest, one whom her girl's eye told her bore the handsomest face and form she had ever looked upon.

In May she left behind forever the simple life she had led among the forest-trees,— by the sea-girt shore, in Seymore Castle, all she was born heir to, and in May she entered in her seventeenth year, and left, in her twentieth, the happy English school in a pleasant suburb of London, where with four other girls of her own age, she spent three years, the merriest she had known; unshadowed by a single cloud. The present, among her girl companions, full of pleasant morning light of opening flowers and of dew,— the future, to which she looked forward, radiant with noon-day brightness; Herbert Sydney the sun and centre; her path strewn with red roses and white lilies heavy with perfume. Of all the

fair young girls who together sang their morning song of praise, and knelt in prayer at eventide, none had a happier heart or was more free from care than Ruby.

Herbert Sydney had promised her he would win her hand with her father's consent, and she believed him with a childlike faith; she never once thought of the desert sands he must tread with bare and bleeding feet, the rocky mountain heights he must climb unaided,—the deep ravines whose rapid torrents he must stem, the dark waters of which have whelmed so many a brave young ardent heart. No, he had promised, she believed then, in his power being equal to his will, and this thought formed her happiness.

The time came all too soon when she could look abroad on the world, and reasoning from analogy, feel the bitter truth, that of the hundreds of thousands who press along the upward path to fame, only one in a thousand reaches the pinnacle for which they all so bravely strive. All along the way lie grassy mounds covering deep dark graves, where the earnest and brave hearts, wearied with the strife, have folded their pale hands meekly on their breasts, and laid them down to rest.

She came to think of this in after years, and to ask herself in the broad noonday, and in the silent midnight, if it would be so with Herbert Sydney, but that time was not yet.

It was in May, Ruby entered as its mistress, the handsome villa residence at Bayswater, which her father had bought and furnished for his darling, and where Ethel and her husband, Colonel Ponsonby, were to be her guests for at least a year. Ethel in her position of a

married woman, doing away with the necessity there would otherwise have been for Lord Seymore residing in the house, a thing not reconcilable with his duty at the Tower.

Their nearest neighbour was the blind Countess of Sydenhault, who, the possessor, of an almost palatial residence at Bayswater, with her two sons, Lord Sydenhault and the Honorable Mr. Penryth, spent the half of the year there, the other half at Sydenhault Hall.

Between the families at Sydenhault Hall and Seymore Castle there had always existed the closest friendship, which was only interrupted by Lord Seymore's desire to indulge his sorrow in solitude.

Subsequently trouble came to the family of the Countess which caused them also to seek seclusion. The eldest son who had been abroad for seven years, and was hastily recalled that he might see his father die, and assume his place as the Earl of Sydenhault, returned to his home, ill with a raging fever, from which he arose with weakened intellect to be an unceasing care to his remaining parent, whose own infirmity of blindness coming on but too surely year by year, would have made most women helpless. It was not so with the brave hearted Countess, however; she cared for her stricken son with all a mother's love, never permitting him to be separated from her for a single day, pleasing the half imbecile man by making him fancy that his presence was necessary to her, because of her own infirmity.

Ruby's vacations during her residence at St. John's wood had been spent in the Countess of Sydenhault's Villa. These were pleasant days, and marked by much

happiness, one young friend after another had always been invited as a companion for Ruby, and the blind Countess, accustomed now for nearly twenty years to want of sight, drove into town each day, accompanied by her infirm son and her young visitors, that the latter might enjoy the pleasure of seeing all the sights the world of London has to shew.

The British Museum was a favorite place of resort, the blind woman who could with difficulty tell day from night, leading them with most perfect accuracy to each particular room, and the separate pictures or pieces of statuary, she wished them to examine, never for one moment forgetting her poor son, talking to him, questioning, and endeavouring to draw out his dormant intellect, as if he were a child, and she hoped at some future day to see him take his place among his fellow-men.

During the first visit Ruby paid to the Countess of Sydenhault, her second son was much struck by the fair face, and sweet simplicity of his mother's guest. Ruby's natural elegance, joined to the repose and innocence of her demeanor having a fascination for him, and acquiring a power over his heart, which none of the beautiful women whom he was accustomed to meet in society had been able to exercise. There were not lacking, daughters of the rich and great among whom he lived, young ladies with blood as blue as his own, lovely faces and large fortunes, who would gladly have been bride to the presumptive heir to the Barony of Sydenhault, with his handsome face and figure, his courtly manners, high birth, and seventy thousand pounds a year in prospective.

On her subsequent visits the feeling deepened into love, love which seemed ridiculous, owing to the disparity in age between himself and her whom he would fain make his wife.

"That little girl with her beautiful face, and her gentle look of maiden modesty," said he to his mother in speaking of Ruby shortly after she had left school and become the mistress of her father's villa, "is dangerous society for me, she is the only one I ever saw whom I could wish to make my wife."

"Little girl," repeated his mother, "you must certainly not talk in that way of a young lady who has completed her twentieth year. I can fancy she is beautiful, her mother was the loveliest woman I ever saw; I know she is sweet tempered and far above the little vanities which mark many girls at her age. If she has really awakened an interest in your heart, why do you not consult her father? If he does not consider you of too mature an age for his daughter, then try to win the young lady herself. You have several advantages on your side, one of which is that she must of consequence be fancy free, she has not yet been introduced into society and therefore probably has never seen any one who could have made an impression on her heart."

Mr. Penryth was a man whose selfishness knew no bounds. It never once occured to him that it was very improbable that a girl of twenty years should love a man of forty-five, so that, by becoming his wife she would be made a happy woman, the great question was, how it concerned himself.

Ruby's fortune was a small one, Seymore Castle with

a few hundred acres of ground and ten thousand pounds. This was nothing in his eyes, he felt certain his brother could not possibly recover, he himself was sole heir to both his father's and his mother's land, consisting of large estates in North Wales, and immense tract of lake, moor and forest in Scotland, and every acre for miles around Sydenhault Hall, except the narrow strip, on which Seymore Castle was built, running from Sebert forest down to the sea. His rental would be seventy thousand pounds a year, his rank of the highest in England by both birth and place, and Ruby's rank was as elevated and her blood as pure as his own. His mirror told him that both his face and figure were in good preservation, he was not slow in adopting his mother's view of the case, he had little fear of a refusal from Lord Seymore, and many beautiful girls with larger expectations than Miss Seymore he was sure would be his for the wooing. He thought over the matter for some days, the more he considered it the more natural it seemed, until a few weeks after the above conversation with his mother, he rode to the Tower, and asked Lord Seymore for the hand of his daughter.

Now, if any one had been able to read the secrets of Lord Seymore's heart they would there have seen that his dearest object in life, his highest ambition, was that Ruby should become Countess of Sydenhault. In the long ago before he left Seymore Castle, when he would at times look and wonder at the beautiful face, he used to say to himself with a sigh of deep regret, "to what end is all this grace and beauty? Penryth will be married long before she is grown to womanhood."

From the time Mr. Penryth first became attracted by Ruby's fair face, Lord Seymore had been aware of it. He had not been taken by surprise, he had for the three past years known how it would be, and yet, now that Mr. Penryth had asked his daughter to become his wife the future Countess of Sydenhault, to be mistress of the land, which ever since the Norman Conquest, had been, acre by acre, mountain, forest, river and wold, leaving the descendants of the old King Sebert and falling into the hands of the Earls of Sydenhault, his heart beat high with triumph, his whole frame trembled with excitement.

He thought that now he could see the good of the Talisman; it is true he had heard of many a miraculous escape which the Barons of Seymore had made from perils by the sea, perils by the sword, but what was that when their wealth and power were melting piecemeal away from them. Now all would be restored, Ruby would not only be possessed of all the old Sebert lands and wealth, but of more than the Seberts had ever dreamed of. His mind went back to the hour when old Godfrey had brought him the tidings which then seemed to foreshadow the complete extinction of his race. "Be patient my Lord, your child is a daughter," *now*, he exclaimed in his heart, "Lo! is she not better to me than ten sons?"

While all this was passing in review before Lord Seymore, he forgot that Mr. Penryth was waiting beside him unanswered. The suitor was beginning to fear, that the Baron, upon whom he had reckoned as his friend, had other views for his beautiful daughter.

A dignified but cordial response in the affirmative restored the lover's peace of mind.

"Have you spoken to Ruby on the subject."

"No, I — in fact I considered it proper that you should give me your leave to do so."

"Of course, certainly, you were right; perhaps it would be the best plan for me to break the matter to Ruby in the first instance myself, she is very young.

Lord Seymore had his misgivings as to what Ruby's ideas on the subject might be. He had not forgotten the story of "The schoolmaster" as he was pleased to call Herbert Sydney.

"Very young," repeated Mr. Penryth, "certainly, I should not think of marrying an old woman."

Mr. Penryth fancied that Lord Seymore in alluding to his daughter's age had some reference to the discrepancy there would be in that respect between them; he did not like to be thought old, he was in good preservation, few men looked so well at forty as he looked at forty-five, his valet told him he did not look more than thirty and he believed him; he had feared Ruby would object (in her heart) to his age, but it was odious to hear any allusion to it from her father. Lord Seymore could read what was passing in Mr. Penryth's mind as easily as the letters in a printed book; and he replied, with a reassuring smile,—

"I should hope not, with your rent roll, such a proceeding would be simply folly; nor is it Ruby's age in years which makes it best that I should break the subject of marriage to her; but the nun-like life she has led, first in Seymore Castle, then at school where, from

having lost her mother, I was obliged to place her, and from which she has only, so to speak, just made her escape."

"It is this very simplicity of character, this retiring maiden modesty which, in my eyes, forms her chief attraction," replied the lover, "nor do I think, fancy free as she must be, that it is at all likely she will dispute your wishes in her choice of a husband. I coincide entirely with you, in thinking it best you should inform Miss Seymore what your sentiments are, before I make proposals to herself in form."

"I will ride out to Bayswater and speak to Ruby today on the subject," said Lord Seymore, "but," added he,— thoughts of "The schoolmaster" obtruding themselves,—"do not forget that there is a certain amount of wooing, which must be done." The Baron's heart smote him as he spoke, he thought of days long gone by, and of fair Rosamond Percy, how sure he was of her answer; how troubled lest her father should look for a richer bridegroom for his child. Now the case was reversed, lands and gold in abundance; but what young girl ever appreciated these? Alas! the very quality that made Ruby so loved and loving, was, that in every relation of life she ignored such things, valued them at their true worth, to her, the priceless human heart was far above rank or state, lands or gold.

Lord Seymore rode over to Bayswater with his future son-in-law, parting with him at the villa gate with a hearty shake of the hand, which shewed Mr. Penryth more clearly than any words could have done that he was Lord Seymore's choice.

Ruby was happy to see her father, he had been very busy lately, and she had not seen him for the past week. He did not like her to come to the Tower; he saw too plainly that she possessed the sensitive, nervous temperament of her mother, and the Tower of London with its associations of bloodshed and crime, of broken hearts, of the young and fair and brave, who had perished there on the scaffold, or withered day by day in its dungeons, was the very worst place she could enter, the memory of which might cling to her, and haunt her dreams for years. Hence she could only see her father when he came to visit her at Bayswater.

"I am so glad you came to-day papa, Ethel and Colonel Ponsonby have gone to drive, and I shall have you all to myself to show you the improvements I have made. Come first into the conservatory, I have got all my birds there, and all the old fashioned flowers we used to love so much at Seymore, and out on the lawn, quaint old beds like those at home, such quantities of lily of the valley, wall flowers and great red roses.

"I will, by and bye, at present I wish to speak to you on the subject which brought me out to Bayswater to-day. Sit down by me, Ruby." Lord Seymore took his child's hand and made her sit by him, so that he could see and read her countenance. Now that he was looking on her fair sweet face, his former misgivings came all back with sevenfold force, her quiet, girlish innocence, her love for her birds and flowers were all inimical to a wish to be the future Countess of Sydenhault, with a Lord twenty-five years older than herself. The very simplicity of her dress, a plain white muslin, seem-

ed, trifle as it was, to militate against the cause he would fain have had her look upon with his own eyes. And that handsome tutor, how he hated him, he determined to lay his views before her at once, to give her no chance of thinking otherwise, than in accordance with his opinion, but, by a grand *coup-de-main*, to convince her she was the most fortunate girl in England.

"Ruby! this has been one of the happiest days of my life. I have had an interview with a dear and valued young friend," (young stuck a little in his throat, but he choked it down with the thought, he is five years younger than I am, and he looks fifteen, my hair is grey, my face full of lines of care, his hair is crisp and black, his skin smooth,) he continued, "one of a long line of ancestry, with riches and lands that might win him a duke's daughter, a handsome face and form, a future Peer of the realm." Ruby sat listening with great earnest eyes, wondering to what all this was to tend; a fear seized her, lest this handsome, rich friend had come to tell her father that, he, together with some others equally influential, had got the Baron appointed to the Governor Generalship of India, and she would lose him again for years, as she had lost him when he was appointed to the Tower. "Mr. Penryth has this day come to ask you in marriage. I promised at once that you should be his; thus is fulfilled the first wish of my heart. I shall not only see you married in your youth to a highly estimable, honorable man, but to one who can place you in the rank and position from which the Seymores have been falling for generations, the old lands of Sebert will

be yours, in you will the family resume again the position and power it has lost."

Ruby was horror struck. For some minutes she could not answer, her face, from which every particle of color had faded, leaving it as white and nearly as cold as marble, was but too truly an index of the fear which almost froze her heart. Her father saw and noted this, going on in his enumeration of the advantages she would have, the lands and wealth and power she would possess as Countess of Sydenhault, the servants and carriages that would be at her command, and the jewels she would wear. Her heart almost stopped beating—she clasped her hands, and leaning forward towards her father, as if she would plead for mercy, said in faltering accents:

"Father, I can never marry Mr. Penryth."

He looked at her in unfeigned astonishment; he had expected a slight remonstrance—a flood of tears, and he was all the while steeling himself against *this*, but for these rebellious words, so full of womanly decision, he was wholly unprepared.

"Ruby, what did you say?—my ears must have deceived me—you will not marry Mr. Penryth!—the daughters of gentlemen in my rank of life, marry the men of their father's choice;—it is not supposed that girls of your age are capable of judging whom they should, or should not marry. If I know myself;—if I live and keep my senses;—you shall be Mr. Penryth's wife ere the grass is mown this year, or the Summer leaves turn yellow."

"No, my father, I never will." Ruby's thoughts fled back to Herbert Sidney and St. Wolfgang's rock, and

they shaped her words. "I would rather make my dwelling-place on the Saint's rock, trusting to the mercy of the wild sea waves than marry Mr. Penryth."

"I will not argue the point with you, my child, but that you marry the man I have chosen for you, the man I would choose had I every one in Britain who boasts a title sueing for your hand, is as certain as if it was already a consummated fact. This day week Mr. Penryth will dine here with me, I expect you then to welcome him, as your affianced husband."

Lord Seymore gone, Ruby was left alone, her brain in a wild whirl, her heart almost turned to stone. She had in one short hour left behind the old life, with all its little troubles, its short-lived cares, its sunshine and its flowers, and entered on "A stormy sea where was never a ship." How had all her fond dreams of home and Herbert Sydney been scattered by the fierce north wind! She pressed her hands one over the other upon her closed eyes and moaned out in her despair,

("Oh! that I were dead!")

Lord Seymore came to Bayswater every day, taking care to be there during Mr. Penryth's visits. He explained to him that Ruby had a girl's fancy to remain as she was for some years to come, but that he wished to see her Mrs. Penryth ere the year was out.

Mr. Penryth could not shut his eyes to the fact that Ruby's cheek was becoming paler and thinner day by day, her eyes larger and brighter, that in her heart most surely there was no love for him. But his own love became stronger and deeper, he was willing to take her on any terms, and her father had determined if she should

only live a year, she should for that year be Mrs. Penryth. So they settled it between them, that in the end of August this ill-starred marriage, this sacrifice on the altar of mammon, and rank-worship should take place.

Ethel was delighted, she looked upon Ruby's misery as romantic nonsense, which would all end the first day of her wedded life.

"You are the most foolish nonsensical girl I ever saw or heard of," said she, in one of her many essays to make Ruby listen to what she called reason, "half the girls in London are doubtless envying you the handsome wealthy husband you are to have, while you consider it a misfortune to be obliged to marry him. I do think Ruby it must be half affectation. Why the Sydenhault diamonds alone would make me crazy to marry him, were he old and ugly, instead of comparatively young and certainly handsome. What do you mean? you know the old song,

"Saltoun's bowed in the back,
And crooked in the arm,
But the bonny lands of Saltoun
To me are the charm."

"I never in my life heard of any one who would not be delighted at the thought of marrying a rich titled husband, except yourself."

"Ethel, I will never marry him, they may take me to the church, but I shall never leave it alive." The sad yet determined tone in which these words were uttered, the white face and compressed lips that spoke, almost frightened her volatile companion.

"For mercy's sake, Ruby, don't speak in that way, or

you'll terrify me so, I shall not have courage to accompany you, do you mean to conceal a poniard in your bosom, and just as the words have been uttered by the priest, 'They whom God hath joined let no man put asunder,' seize the weapon and plunging it into your heart? — these are the approved words for recording that style of thing, are they not?"

"No, I do not, Ethel, but since I knew that I should be forced to marry a man I cannot love, I have prayed to God day and night that He would let me die, here in this house ere the twentieth of August, the day, if I live to see it, which will be to me the darkest that ever dawned. He may not grant my prayer, but I know that if I live to enter the church in marriage robes, I will never live to leave it, perhaps it is better I should die there, it may make other fathers have more mercy than mine has."

The white lips which spoke these words, and the great heavy eyes set in the marble face that looked at her with an expression bordering on despair, made Ethel shiver with fear for a moment or two. But her volatile nature soon shook off the strange feeling; and as she could not understand how Ruby or any one else could really feel what she said in view of the brilliant alliance she was about to form, she comforted herself by assigning all such words to the romance of her cousin's nature, which made her prefer, or think she preferred, wild roses to camellias and daisies to gumcistus. Ethel believed in her heart that all this sickly romantic nonsense would pass away, and that Ruby would be truly one of the happiest wives in London if not the very happiest.

A trousseau fit for a Duchess was ordered, and sent home to the weary girl whose heavy heart would not permit her to look at satin dress or pearl necklace.

Mr. Penryth's present to his bride, a necklace and bracelet of diamonds which a Queen might have envied, was sent to Ruby through her father on the nineteenth, the evening previous to the wedding day.

Ruby threw her arms round her father:

"Oh! Papa, take them back, give them to Mr. Penryth, if they are put on me they will only adorn the neck and arms of a corpse, the brightness of these gems go through my eyes to my heart, wounding it like a poisoned arrow; they will do the same to you and Mr. Penryth both when I am dead."

Lord Seymore's cold blue eye fell on her with the hard stony look she had become accustomed to during the past three months, as loosening the hold her arms had of his person he said, sternly:

"There is not the least fear of their adorning a corpse. I am tired of all this nonsense; put on these to-morrow and feel, as you ought to feel, the generous love of your bridegroom in presenting you with such a costly gift. Take care, lest wearied with your discontented melancholy face, he does not desert you now, at the last moment, and leave you to wear the willow, a laughing stock to all the aristocracy in London."

"Oh! that he would be merciful and do so," came from Ruby's pale lips.

That night Colonel Ponsonby said to his wife:

"I would as soon imbrue my hands in that beautiful child's blood as have any hand in that unnatural mar-

riage. Seymore is as surely dooming his child to death, as if he took one of the axes in the Tower and severed her head from her body, I do not know but the latter would be the less barbarous action of the two."

Ethel stared at her husband with a half frightened look,

"I wish I had had nothing to say to it; I always encouraged uncle Seymore in urging Ruby to marry Mr. Penryth, because I thought it would be a grand thing for her to be the wife of so wealthy a man, a future peer, and one who will possess such immense tracts of land; but I wish now I had never interfered, never spoken on the subject. It will be a lesson to me to my life's end."

"It's a great shame; that girl's white face makes my heart sore every time I look at it. He's a spiritless fellow that Penryth, or he would have nothing to do with a girl whose whole soul is evidently set against him. It is strange too, he is a good looking man, and so courtly in his manners, I should fancy he could be fascinating enough when he chose."

"Harry," said his wife hurriedly, "do you recollect the young man who saved Ruby and me that night on the Saint's Rock? You saw him on the quay?"

"Who? the lad who looked so handsome in spite of dripping clothes, shoeless feet, and hatless head? Yes, I remember him well, I never saw a better looking fellow. What of him?"

Ethel rose from her seat and putting a hand on each of her husband's shoulders and looking earnestly in his face, said in a low voice as if fearful of being overheard,

"I think Ruby loves him, and has always loved him since that dreadful night."

"That handsome boy?"

"Yes," still speaking in a low voice.

Colonel Ponsonby shrugged his shoulders,

"I see it all now; no wonder she could not love Mr. Penryth."

CHAPTER IX.

THE SPRING TIDE PICTURES. ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH.

BARON EPHRAIM, whom the Hebrews call NATHAN THE SEEKER, is on his way to London, there to resume his duties as Keeper of the Records at the Tower. He is in Paris, not as we saw him while entering the city of Grenada in the habit of a poor wayfaring man, but dressed with the care befitting his station as an English gentleman.

He passes leisurely along the Rue Rivoli, stopping first in front of one book-shop, then of another, examining the oldest looking books, but making no purchases.

A young man, tall and dark, with a short brown beard and moustache, stands at one of the stalls, a well-worn volume in his hand, in which he appears to be interested. Baron Ephraim approaches.

The young man asks the stall keeper the price of the book.

As the sound of his voice falls upon the Hebrew's ear, he looks earnestly in the face of the young man for a second or two, and then with a disappointed feeling, busies himself in turning over the books, saying mentally, "The poor artist boy of the Tyrol has died in some obscure lodging from the same fever of which he helped to cure me, or worse still, in the grange of some châlet,

where the frightened peasants have left him to die alone, as would have been my fate but for him."

The stranger speaks more than once to the keeper of the stall who asks an enormous price for the book which he holds in his hand. He is evidently anxious to become possessor of it, yet does not wish to pay the price asked.

Baron Ephraim glances at the book which is open at the ragged title page, his practical eye tells him at a glance it is no genuine old copy, but one of the numerous reprints got up to represent such books.

"That book is valueless," said he, speaking English, which something in the air of the stranger led him to fancy he could understand. "Its title page claims an antiquity of nearly two hundred years, while in reality it has been printed and got up, soiled and torn as you now see it, within probably the last twelve months."

The stranger seemed less to heed the words than the face of the man who spoke to him, and scarcely permitting the Hebrew to finish his sentence, placed his hand familiarly on the shoulder of the other, saying with a face beaming with pleasure,

"Has Baron Ephraim forgotten the boy artist."

"Nay, I have not forgotten you and I recognized the voice at once, although being accustomed to hear you speak English, the French accent which you have picked up to a marvel, puzzled me, and when I saw the bearded face I discarded the idea of your being the one to whom I owe so much; besides, I had given you up long since as dead. You promised to apply to me if you wanted assistance in climbing the height you then looked up to, (I know too well that one, without friends or money, would faint and

fail long before he could reach the mountain top you had set yourself to gain, and I felt sure if you had been in the land of the living I should have heard from you. You have, of course, giving up all idea of becoming an artist?"

"On the contrary, since the day I saw you last I have worked harder than ever I did while I tried to be your sick nurse; come to my atelier, you shall see if I have worked in vain."

Baron Ephraim looked at his watch, "I have just an hour to spare. It is imperatively necessary that I should be in London and at my post by to-morrow night, and to accomplish this I must leave Paris in an hour; but for the detention of a letter which has been following me from place to place, I should now be in London; what annoyed me this morning is a cause of rejoicing now, as it has led to my finding the boy artist again."

They are in the atelier, the Hebrew looking on his friend's work with wonder and delight. The room is a large one, and yet its walls are completely covered with paintings of considerable size, all of which bear unmistakeable marks of being the work of a talented man, who has studied his art, and who in style and colour has marked out a new path for himself.

"Come here," said the artist, "this I consider my *chef-d'œuvre*, on this I have expended all I know of my art; it does not please me, I have painted it over and over, the same subject managed in different ways, and with more or less figures. Necessity has obliged me to paint others for sale. I can always command a fair price, but I have never sold one of these, because I have

never been able to do justice to the face and figure which constitute the principal object in the picture."

Baron Ephraim followed the artist into an inner room divided from the first by a curtain, and on an easel beheld a picture, the beauty of which in both design and work he had seldom seen equalled. The picture was not quite finished, it wanted those nameless touches which an artist always gives; yet it was the work of a master hand, and an uneasy feeling came over the Hebrew as he felt sure he knew the subject, had seen it before, and could recognize the extreme beauty of the face which formed the object on which the attention was at once centred.

The picture was that of a great rock hidden by the climbing waves of a sea at high tide; amid the waters on its very top clung a white robed, fair haired girl, the spray enveloping her as with a white shroud, a boat at a little distance, the tumultuous eddy and whirl of the waves, telling it was kept there by the vicinity of breakers; a swimmer in the sea nearer to the rock than the boat.

"You copied this," said he. "Even as a copy it possesses great merit, but if you can copy so well, why not try something of your own designing. This is taken from one of Sydney's pictures of "The Spring Tide."

"That is one of them, and intended for the Crown Prince of Prussia!" said the young man, as lifting a brush, he wrote in heavy black lines in the corner of the picture, "H. Sydney."

The Hebrew looked in amazement as he saw the artist write the name on the picture.

"You surely are not Sydney the painter who during the last year has taken the world by surprise, shewing them a phase of art hitherto unknown."

"My name is Sydney" replied the young man, "and the pictures of "The Spring Tide" are mine, in conception and execution. You are the first person who has seen any of these pictures unfinished."

Baron Ephraim stood entranced before the canvas.

"That face must have been one seen in your dreams. You must have great talent to be able to conceive such a combination of beauty as we see in those pictures of "The Spring Tide." The idea of the situation on the top of that rock in the moonlight, drenched with the great waves too, is full of poetry. It is no wonder with your talent that you scorned help."

"That face I often see in my dreams, yet it is no ideal one, it is the face of one I know and love, and hope to win. I did not scorn aid, but with the prize I have in view I felt I could be my own best help. I have fame and fortune both to win ere I can call her my own."

"You have made a great beginning, one almost unparalleled in the annals of your art, it would be simply insult to offer help to you."

Little did Baron Ephraim know that this young painter, of whom the first artists on the continent of Europe spoke with hope and pride, had not at that moment five hundred francs in his purse!

The Baron looked at his watch;

"My dear boy I must go, as I said before, I must be in London to-morrow night without fail; a few weeks hence I will return to Paris that I may spend some days

in your atelier, renew my acquaintance with you, and study your pictures at leisure. I would willingly remain now, but Lord Seymore has requested me as a personal favor, to return at the time I mention; his only child is to be married on the twentieth, to the Hon. Mr. Penryth, heir to Earl Sydenhault, and Lord Seymore wished me to take his place in his absence, some unwonted circumstance having occurred which makes it impossible for him to leave the Tower unless I am there."

Herbert Sydney's heart gave a great leap. For the first time in his life a faintness as of death came upon both body and soul; the painting room seemed to sway from side to side, the picture on the easel to whirl round and round his head with such velocity as to prevent his seeing anything but the various colors which all appeared blended into one.

"Are you ill? what ails you?" asked Baron Ephraim with a look of alarm, as he saw the face of the young artist lose its olive hue and become pale as ashes in a moment.

The window is opened, it is a north light, and the cool breeze from the waters of the Seine is rushing through the atelier, and fanning the artist's face into life again.

He says, "It is a slight faintness, it is over now, the smell of paint is so unhealthy in this hot weather."

Baron Ephraim again looks at the watch he holds in his hand. "If I do not make haste I shall disappoint my friend, I would not do so upon any account. I shall see you again in a few weeks, meantime, take my advice, go into the country, you have been working

too hard, you need relaxation and fresh air, adieu, adieu."

"Good bye."

A fervent clasp of two right hands. The Baron is gone, the artist is standing in front of his picture, the pleading look is in the beautiful eyes, it speaks a piteous prayer for patience, it infuses into his heart a faith stronger than death.

The artist snatches up his hat, locks the door of his painting room, jumps into the first cab he meets, orders the man to drive as fast as possible to the *Chemin de fer du Nord*, takes his ticket, and, as he enters a carriage attached to a train on the point of starting, is jostled by Baron Ephraim, who from his heated appearance and disordered dress seems to have had as little time to spare as Sydney himself.

"Mr. Sydney!" exclaimed the Hebrew in surprise, "you are on your way to the country, you have taken my advice?"

"I am on my way to London, it will be a more effectual change of air than any I can obtain in France."

"I dare say you are right, Now I shall have the pleasure of introducing you to some of your brother artists. I number among my London friends some of the first men of your profession in Europe."

"I do not intend to be more than one day in London, otherwise your offer should be accepted with pleasure."

The travellers thus hurriedly brought together, talked on many subjects; art, science, politics; not the politics of Europe, but of the world, every subject seemed alike to the learned Hebrew, and as he talked the young man

was every now and then weaned from the pain of heart, the sharp agony which was urging him on his way to London.

The approaching marriage was also a theme on which Baron Ephraim touched, the beauty of the bride, (whom he had never seen but of whom all London was talking as being the loveliest girl of the season), the wealth in land and possessions of the bridegroom, his rank, his ancient name, his high descent.

"Where does Lord Seymore's daughter live? Not surely in the Tower with her father?" asks the painter.

"No; she has a beautiful villa at Bayswater, where a married cousin and her husband keep her company, I have met Colonel Ponsonby at Lord Seymore's residence in the Tower."

"Colonel Ponsonby is married to a Miss Wolferstan?" said Mr. Sydney inquiringly.

"Yes, I believe that is the name, do you know him?"

"No, not at all; Colonel Ponsonby is one of the great who are born with a name, which I must make."

"Perhaps you know his wife? She is a neice of Lord Seymore's, and like himself, his sister's family are poor."

"I have seen Mrs. Ponsonby when she was in the school-room, but not since."

Silence.

"You will come to my quarters in the Tower? The place is full of interest, and I myself will be your guide."

"It is impossible at present. I accept, however, your invitation for another time. It is not likely my present visit will extend over to-morrow night."

The friends parted at the London Bridge terminus,

the one took his way to the Tower, the other ordered his cabman to drive to the Grosvenor.

Herbert Sydney bathed his wearied head in cold water, gave his clothes to "the boots" to be brushed, and when they were brought back asked the man if he knew the villa where Colonel and Mrs. Ponsonby lived.

"Yes, sir, my sister's husband keeps the lodge. It's Lord Seymore's villa you mean?"

"It is. Is it far from here?"

"No, sir, if you wish to go there to-morrow, I will shew you the place from the door."

"I will go to-night."

"It is late, sir, past twelve. Yet as my sister's child is very ill, the lodge will be open. That is the lodge sir, you see the roof above the outer walls, there are colored lamps at each side of the gate."

"Thank you, I shall find it easily."

The lodge window was open, a woman sitting by the sill, trying to hush to sleep a child whose low moans told it was in pain.

The artist stayed his steps. "Your baby is ill, what ails it?"

"I scarce can tell, he is teething, my husband has gone to the house for the gardener, he is skilful about children."

The baby moaned and the woman rocked it to and fro. The father of the child came in, accompanied by Jasper; the latter bringing some herb medicine for the child which he came to the window to administer.

"Jasper, do you know me?"

The old man looked quickly up in the face of the artist as he stood in the full light of the harvest moon ;

"I do, and I don't, you look like the brother 'o one I used to know."

"I am he you used to know at Sydenhault oaks, and I want to speak to you alone, I have only been half an hour in London, I came far to see you."

"Come into the grounds, I know un well now."

Herbert Sydney put some of his scanty gold into the woman's hand, as she opened the door of her own cottage, letting him pass through to the grounds.

They walked on for a few minutes in silence.

"Jasper, is what I hear true, that Miss Seymore is bought and sold ?"

"It is but too true, Jasper's voice gets husky as he speaks, Lord Seymore and his father have both been my masters, and they both used me well, they gave me my wage reg'lar, an' I warked for't honest, sometimes hard enough i'th cold an weet, but I would gie every Seymore of them for the young leddy 'ats gaen to be sacrificed to mammon t'morn." They were in front of the conservatory, the door of which stood wide open, shewing a door leading into the house on the other side. "It'll be little pleasure to me to keep this place as it has been keppet, that's her room door yonder an' the first step she takes i'the mornin' is out here. I never gaed into my breakwast till she came aut. I liked better to see her than any flower' at grows."

"Will you let me go into the conservatory, Jasper ?" said Herbert, as they came close by the open glass frame which formed the outer wall of the conservatory.

"I'll do that, an' ye can pu' any flower ye like int' an' I'll do mair than that, I'll gie a letter or anything else ye hae to gie to them ye like best, gin ye wall."

The old man's heart was sore unto breaking, for her he loved as his own child; he had seen enough, in the old time at Seymore Castle, to know that she loved the handsome boy who had saved her from the wild sea waves, better, far better, than Mr. Penryth and all his lands. And it occurred to Jasper that now this handsome boy was come back in his strong manhood, with perhaps lots of money gained in foreign lands, to take away Ruby from this man who was as unpopular among the country people as he was with Thaniel Reil and his sons; and he said to himself, "If it' be sae, I'll go to my bed and have no interference wi' it, I only hope they'll get off 'scot free."

"No, Jasper, I'll not ask you to give a letter to Miss Seymore to-night, but if she is Miss Seymore to-morrow night I will."

"E'en as ye like, the morning at seven o'clock in St. George's Church she'll be Mr. Penryth's wedded wife."

"Perhaps not, Jasper."

"Lord grant it may be sae, but gin there's no a gallant gent'leman like as there used to be in the auld time's at will come, and rin awa wi her the night, I sair fear, she's doomed to be his first wife, an' I'se zure she'll no keep him lang frae another."

Jasper walked away to the other end of the lawn, leaving Herbert Sydney in the conservatory close to Ruby's rooms; for aught he knew it might have been hours or days, he could only think of Jasper's last words. He

could not take her away, like the gallants of old, as the old gardener had suggested, even if he was sure she would be willing to accompany him in direct opposition to all she held dear. He was not possessed of money sufficient to support her for one year as she had been accustomed to live all her life; she was inexpressibly dear to him; life without the hope which had been its light for so many long years, would be but a weary dream. And, yet, if this young high bred girl who had all her life been surrounded by every luxury, should have been won to love Mr. Penryth, would it be right in him to try by word or deed to win her back to the old fancy, now, perhaps almost forgotten, perhaps repented of long ago? He remembered her firmness of disposition, her determination even in trifles to hold to the right, and he felt assured if she herself still treasured her love for him, that she would never marry Mr. Penryth.

The door of the room opposite to where he stood opened for a moment, he saw the glitter of gems and gold, Ruby lying in quiet sleep on a sofa, the wavy tresses of her golden hair shining with reflected light from the wax tapers, the folds of her embroidered robe falling on one side to the ground.

To him the sight of all this wealth of loveliness was simply— despair! — He clasped his hands together in agony, and as he did so said to himself. "Farewell, farewell, Ruby." Unconsciously the last word was spoken half aloud, ringing out, clear as a silver bell amid the surrounding silence.

The sound of his own voice, as it uttered the word 'Ruby' recalled him to what he knew was the straight

path of duty. He turned from the place where he had seen the light of his eyes, the angel form, that walked in all his dreams, lying in placid sleep amid her bridal offerings, the jewels of India. — the gold of Ophir, — lovelier far than ever he had seen her in her early girlhood, and as she slept, it might be, she dreamed of her future husband, Mr. Penryth!

He felt that if by word or look he could disturb this happiness he would deserve to have his future allotted to him in mist and darkness. He knew he should, and must suffer. But he would suffer alone. Ruby would be dear to him for evermore, through all eternity, but none should ever know that it was so; his love and his despair should be buried, first in his heart, and then in his grave.

He plucked a handful of violets from the conservatory, paused for a moment as he heard the sound of Ruby's voice speaking to Monica, he was too far off to distinguish the words she spoke, but the soft accents fell on his ear in a dreamy, happy cadence, and as he listened, he lifted up his full soul to heaven, and prayed that God's blessing might be around her for evermore.

CHAPTER X.

SWEET SCENTED VIOLETS.

LORD SEYMORE and Mr. Penryth tried to convince themselves, and to talk each other into the belief, that, after the marriage, all would go on smoothly; yet each had his secret misgivings. Both dreaded a scene in the church, and, without saying to each other why they thought so, were of the same opinion as to the time for the ceremony. It was appointed to take place at eight in the morning.

The bride was in her chamber. Both there and in the anti-room the tables were strewn with jewels, flowers, ornaments in gold and silver, jewel cases and dressing cases with white satin covers on which the Sydenhault arms with the quarterings of the Sebert's and Seymore's were richly embroidered in silver or in gold; everything around spoke of elegance, luxury and profusion, all told of some auspicious and happy event, in honor of which this display of wealth was brought together.

The fair girl they were meant to please and adorn sat in their midst with tightly clasped hands, rigidly compressed lips, and eyes which seemed like great blazing lights set in a cold marble mask.

Monica, the woman who had nursed Ruby when a motherless baby, and tended her ever since, was moving uneasily through the room; lifting up a precious bauble merely to put it down again in the place from which she had taken it, counting the number of cambric handker-

chiefs which she had already counted scores of times, evincing, by her restlessness, a mind nearly as ill at ease as that of her mistress; with the exception of Monica and the despairing statue-like girl, all in the house had been in bed hours before.

Out on the lawn, old Jasper the gardener, (who since Ruby's return from school had been sent for from Seymore Castle by her desire,) was wandering about the conservatory, which extended along the whole side of the villa occupied by the rooms specially set apart for Ruby's use. Jasper was Monica's confidant, the only one she dared trust with the secret, as she supposed it, of her lady's unhappiness, and dread of this marriage, which the world called the most brilliant match of the season.

Jasper had watched Ruby from her infancy as he would have watched the growth of a graceful plant, the opening of a beauteous bud, his heart nearly broke, when the news fell like death on his soul, that the wealthy Mr. Penryth, who was old enough to be her father, had come to bear away the glory and the darling of the old Castle. At the bottom of his soul lay the saddest feeling of all, the knowledge that she, with all her prospects of wealth and noble state, bore a wearier heart than the meanest hind who served her father.

The hours passed on, as they will pass, whether we are in joy or in sorrow; Monica had more than once tried to persuade her young mistress to lie down and seek repose upon the sofa where she sat so still and death-like. Ruby answered not, but the great wistful eyes told that it was rest of soul, not of body, that was

needed, the lids could not close over those blazing eyes, sleep could not come to that troubled heart. The midnight hour passed, one — two, the dawn would soon pale the wax lights in that chamber where a heart was breaking amid gold and gems.

Monica opened the door opposite the sofa where Ruby sat as still and nearly as cold and lifeless as if she had been turned to stone. The door was one entering into the conservatory, the outer doors of which in those warm autumn nights were never closed. The cool air came on the poor wan face, fanning it with sweet odours from the flowers over which it swept; a plot of sweet violets grew exactly opposite the door, the perfume of which brought memories that seemed to rouse Ruby from her stupor.

She rose, and going to the dressing case she had used in her early girlhood, took from it a set of ivory tablets, a bouquet of faded violets; she kissed both passionately many times. Monica saw but seemed not to heed, she herself had loved and lost in the long ago, and knew well why such trifles were held so dear.

"Monica," the voice did not sound like Ruby's; it was strange and hollow, "come here, I wish to say something to you. I hope ere this time to-morrow to be cold and dead, will you promise to put these dead flowers, those tablets, close to my dead heart?"

"If I live to see you dead I will do even as you say." Monica's voice was choked with emotion, and her tears fell like rain.

Ruby put her arms round the woman's neck, sobbing out,

"Oh! Nurse, what shall I do? If I could only die soon enough, before I am forced into that terrible marriage!"

"You must pray to God, my child, He alone can help you."

"Oh! I have been praying all these long months every day, almost every hour, that He would let me die."

"Pray that He may save you to do His will on earth, to live to His glory and in His service; and, if it be His will, may He put a stumbling block in the way of this hated marriage."

"Alas! alas! Monica, that cannot be, it is too late now."

As she spoke, she looked around with a wild expression, as if searching for some place to which she might fly from her persecutors. Monica feared for her reason, and leading her to the sofa opposite the open door, induced her to lie down, she herself sitting on a low stool watching the white face of her young mistress. The exertion and excitement of the last few minutes had completely overpowered the worn out girl; Ruby's eyes closed in sleep.

Monica asked the question of her own soul. "Would it not be better she should never wake again?" As she sat with eyes intently fixed on the white face of the sleeper, fearing lest with the dawn, which must now be close at hand, the birds out among the lilacs and laburnums, should awaken Ruby with their morning songs, she rose, intending to go and close the conservatory door so as to shut out the sound. As she moved towards the door, a slight rustle among the leaves outside arrested her steps; she heard a low voice distinctly say, "Ruby!"

The sleeping girl opened her eyes,

"Monica, who called me?" she asked in a hurried, earnest tone.

"Jasper has been in the conservatory and about the lawn all night, perhaps it is he."

"No," replied Ruby raising herself, "it was not Jasper. I know the voice well, it is one from the dead. Oh! if they would only leave me to myself and let me die."

As Ruby spoke these words she looked more like herself than Monica had seen her since the marriage day had been fixed on. She had recognized the voice at once as Herbert Sydney's, indistinct and low as it fell on her half awakened ear, it was his and none other. She had heard no tidings of him for more than three years, and she now felt assured he had passed from earth to heaven. The sweet promise he had given her when they last met in his mother's house at Sydenhault Oaks, came back as fresh as yesterday. "If the dead are permitted to visit this earth, I will never be far from you!"

"Monica," said she, as she sat upright on the sofa, and with both hands pushed back the fair hair that fell in wavy masses about her face, "I have had a dream, a dream sent me from heaven, the voice who called me was that of one who came from the dead with a message to me. I saw in my sleep one I knew years ago, come into this room, and lifting that coronet, he said, "Ruby, you must never wear this; its gold and gems are false, and will crumble into dust at your touch, I will give you a true coronet of the pure gold of Ophir, farewell, Ruby!"—As he said the last word I opened my eyes, he was gone. Oh! Monica, what shall I do? I gave my promise on

the honour of a Seymore, to wed the one I saw in my dream, it will be deadly sin in me to wed Mr. Penryth."

She was speaking rapidly, she now stopped, breathless, the dawn had deepened into day with blue and rosy skies, the birds singing, the laburnums waving their golden blossoms, the lilacs rustling their shiny leaves as if there were no breaking hearts on this green earth.

CHAPTER XI.

FOR A NAME AND A RING.

LONG before the hour for opening the church, Herbert Sydney was pacing with quick foot, to and fro in front of St. George's, Hanover Square. At last the Beadle made his appearance, dressed in his cocked hat, his blue coat with its red cape coming from the inside, airing his portly person, and looking out from the ponderous doors as he opened them, with a complacency which told that his situation was easy and comfortable, that he was well paid, and well fed. It is wonderful how these creature comforts, in most cases, make or mar the man.

"Good morning," said Sydney, as he approached this important personage, noting as he spoke, the low retreating forehead, the protuberant eyes, and the great hanging under-lip, all telling that the douceur he offered, would pave his way to favour; "have you a marriage here to-day?"

"We have several," answered the great man, as he pocketed the gold coin with a suave look, and speaking with the grandiloquence he always used when addressing those whom he termed "the inferior classes," thereby meaning all who did not drive in their own carriages, "we have for ten o'clock,"—

"I beg your pardon, but I must leave London before that hour; have you no early marriages?"

"Yes — ss —we have one at eight o'clock precisely, by special license, the Hon. Mr. Penryth, bridegroom, to the only daughter of Lord Seymore, very aristocratic people, singularly conservative." The stout man delivered this speech with, if possible, more pomposity than usual.

"That hour would exactly suit me; could you not contrive to put me behind some pillar, where I should be unseen, and yet see the bride, it would be something on my return to Paris, to say I had seen the marriage of Lord Seymore's daughter."

"Come in," said the Beadle, "we will see what can be done."

It seemed a difficult matter to arrange, first one pillar was tried and then another, the important affair was still undecided, when the sound of carriage wheels coming towards, and then stopping close to the church, attracted the attention of the Beadle, who lost, at least, one half of his pomposity in an instant; pointing hurriedly with his finger to the pillar by which he wished Herbert to stand, he left the church, returning in a few minutes in the rear of the bridegroom and his party.

Five — ten — twenty minutes passed, and yet the bride came not. Herbert Sydney's heart beat high with hope, could he be mistaken after all? He asked himself — did those soft accents spoken in the night, which still lingered in his ear, take their tone from weariness and unrest, and not from love's full hope of fruition, as he had supposed?

Mr. Penryth stirred in his seat, opened and shut his prayer book, and at last unable to restrain his impa-

tience, walked up and down the nave; went out under the portico, once — twice, each time, on his return to his party, his face shewing a shade less of its natural olive, a shade more of ashen grey. Whatever it might be that detained the bride, the bridegroom was full of trouble.

The clergyman has also been waiting; he is an old man and sits quietly in his great chair within the altar rails as if he loved to rest, he looks around leisurely; not so his assistant, he displays but too plainly the same impatience as Mr. Penryth, but only the impatience, he shares not his trouble and disquiet.

The clergyman sees the annoyance of his coadjutor, though the young man takes care it is expressed only by his eyes, which, every second or two, seek the door; the old man smiles, his smile is returned, but the answering one says plainly, "what a bore to be kept here all day."

The finger of the loudly ticking clock points to three minutes to nine; the clergyman rises from his chair, he too is now tired of waiting, perhaps he thinks it is useless, he has before waited for a bride, who never came; he consults his watch, compares it with the church clock under the organ loft.

Hush! — the tread of light and heavy feet, the rustle of silk, the soft sound of wavy satin, the sheen of white garments. — The bride is in the church. — Mr. Penryth's face is dark and handsome now with the rich blood that suffuses cheek and brow.

Herbert Sydney listens as the solemn words which join his love to that handsome man who might be her father, and whom he hates with a deadly hatred, are

being spoken by the grey-haired priest within the altar rails. They are pealing in low solemn sounds through the empty church, each word as it falls, snatched up by Mr. Penryth and Lord Seymore as if they contained the elixir of life for them. To the silent watcher at the pillar they were as the "savour of death unto death."

Herbert Sydney noted them not, did not see the face of man or woman there, nor saw aught of what passed, save the pale face on which he looked so steadfastly and saw so distinctly through the lace cloud of its bridal veil, telling him that Mr. Penryth was not her choice.

Is she conscious of his presence hid there behind that pillar? Does she wish to shew him more clearly that for her all hope on earth is dead and gone? Is it this that makes her throw back her veil? Not so, she sees him not.

Mr. Penryth has responded to his name, promised to love and cherish that fair girl unto his last breath.

Every faculty in Herbert Sydney's being is more keenly alive now than ever they were in all his former life. There is but one such season comes to either man or woman.

In one lightning glance he comprehended all he saw, he had not heard Mr. Penryth's last words, yet he knew they were spoken, knew why Lord Seymore drew himself up to his full height, why he bore himself so proudly.

He hears Ruby called twice by her christian name, and he hears her answer "I cannot, I cannot!"

He hears Lord Seymore exclaim, in a voice that rings as if it were the trump of the angel who will wake the

dead, "Go on with the ceremony," and for the third time the white-haired priest asks Edith Seymore if she will wed Edward Penryth.

Herbert Sydney moves one step and with folded arms looks upon his love, her whole face is alight with recognition, — her eyes blazing with joy, — a wild cry of, "Never!" echoes through the silent church.

Ruby has fallen on the altar steps, her bridesmaids and her kinsfolk close around her.

The priest stands upright, his book in his hand, an expression of solemn satisfaction on his face as he sees Ruby borne from the church.

The priest and his curate have left the altar, gone to disrobe themselves of their white surplices in the vestry. — The marriage guests have gone in wonder to their homes.— The church is closed. Herbert Sydney is out in the busy street.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BLIND COUNTESS.

"WHO in the world has done this?" exclaimed Brown, Lord Sydenhault's own man, as opening the cupboard in which he kept his master's medicine, a place never left unlocked, the key of which he trusted to no one, he found the bottle lying on its side, the contents nearly all spilled, wetting the shelf from end to end.

The man lifted up the bottle in hopes there might be a part, at least, left; there was scarcely a spoonful!

Had a stranger been present, he would have looked with amazement at the emotion the man betrayed as he held up the bottle and saw that its contents were entirely gone.

"What shall I do? What will become of me? I am the most unfortunate man under the sun!" said the poor fellow aloud, as he put down the bottle on the damp shelf, and stood looking despairingly on the now useless medicine, which he would gladly have given anything to be able to replace.

"It is ten years," he said, "since the last bottle was broken, and my Lord was then four days without his medicine, and Mr. Penryth warned me if a like accident occurred again I should have to leave."

The room door opened, the man started,— it was Mrs. Morgan, the housekeeper, who entered.

"What is the matter, Brown? What makes you look so frightened?"

"Matter enough, Mrs. Morgan, I may trust you, you have always been my friend."

"You're the most faithful servant in Lady Sydenhault's house, Brown, I think you have been twenty years in her service, and I am sure in all that time you have never committed a wilful fault; what has happened?"

"Look at that, his Lordship's medicine all spilt, and how, Heaven only knows; I am as careful of it as of my life."

"Well, there can be more got."

"No, that's the worst of it, I have a supply given me every three months, I shall have more given me on the first of September, and not till then. It is Mr. Penryth himself who gets it for me, no one else can; I do not know the doctor who drew up the prescription, or the apothecary who makes up the medicine; Mr. Penryth will not be at home until the evening of the nineteenth, too late to get the medicine, and will be off on his wedding tour on the twentieth.

"He is only going to the Hall, and will be back to spend a day in London on the twenty-fifth; you can get the medicine then."

The man's face still wore the same look of misery;

"You don't understand, Mrs. Morgan; this medicine is the only thing that keeps my Lord from being a raving maniac, by its being given to him regularly. The medicine was spilt once before, and Mr. Penryth told me that if such a thing occurred again I should lose my place. You know what he says, he means."

"If you were out of this house to-morrow you'd get a good place, you need'nt fear that, and I don't believe the Countess will let him send you away."

"Perhaps not away from the family, but, Mrs. Morgan, you don't know my wages; I have a hundred and fifty pounds a year, and with all that money my family is so extravagant I can scarcely make the two ends meet at the close of the year. What will they do on ordinary wages? God help me and direct me what to do."

"Let me see the bottle, Brown," said the housekeeper. She did not believe a word of what Brown received with such simple faith, namely, that the want of this medicine would make Lord Sydenhault raving mad; she had known of his being a week without his medicine before, and no evil happened; on the contrary, the poor man, during that time, complained less of his head than ever he had done before or since. She had known Mr. Penryth from his boyhood, and knew he was not over scrupulous as to what he did or said to accomplish his ends; that the medicine was necessary to his Lordship she had no doubt, but that the want of it, for so short a time, would affect Lord Sydenhault so fearfully she could not believe. At any rate, she would take the risk, if there were any, on herself.

She smelt the medicine, held it between her eyes and the light, and saying to Brown, "I'll give you something that'll do in place of this till Mr. Penryth's return. He will give you more himself, before he goes to the continent;" she left the room.

The medicine smelt and tasted of port wine and cinnamon, and the housekeeper filled the bottle with port

wine into which a small quantity of the oil of cinnamon dissolved in spirits of wine was poured.

Brown received it from her hands, tasted it, it tasted exactly the same as that which had been spilt. The poor man was earnest in his expressions of gratitude.

"What can I do to repay you; you have saved my family from beggary."

This happened five days previous to the day appointed for Mr. Penryth's marriage.

When the exciting scene at St. George's was over, the Countess of Sydenhault, and her imbecile son, returned to their villa at Bayswater. Lord Sydenhault was less dreamy than usual, repeating to his mother all he had seen. She was quick of hearing, and her intellect was as bright as it had been thirty years ago. She understood the situation, and felt deeply the wound which had been given to her son's heart and pride; he had all her sympathy; but she did not see the white face of the bride, —that she had struggled more than once to release her arm,— had thrown back her veil! or that at last she had fainted on the altar steps!

All this was told her by her weak minded son, as clearly and distinctly as he ever related anything in his boyhood, ere ever he left his father's home, or was afflicted with his sore malady.

"I saw more than that, mother," said he, "I saw behind one of the pillars the same boy we saw so long ago, in the moonlight on the quay at Sydenhault Oaks; only he is now a man, his beard is unshaven, and he looked all the time on the bride's white face. I like that man,

but it pains me to see him, I think he makes my heart sore."

"My dear Arthur, that must be one of your day-dreams. You could not recollect that boy's face, only seen once before, besides what could bring him there ?"

The Countess sighed, her poor son had been more sensible, less dreamy than usual, for some days past, and she had been buoying herself up, as she had done many and many a time previously, with the thought that perhaps he might yet become, as he had once been, the best, the most talented, and the most intelligent of her sons ; this foolish idea of his, seemed once more to dash her hopes to the ground.

"Brown," said the Countess, a day or two after this conversation with her son, "on the day of that most annoying affair at St. George's, did you see any one there besides the invited guests ? I understood from Mr. Penryth that there were to be no others admitted, yet my Lord has more than once spoken of a man, he says, he saw behind one of the pillars, it must have been fancy."

"No, my Lady, I saw a man there too, a gentleman who wore a beard and moustache."

An unmistakeable ray of pleasure passed over the Countess' face, almost giving expression to her sightless eyes.

"I am glad to hear that, Brown, do you know I observe quite a difference in Lord Sydenhault for some time past, he does not wander from one subject to another as he used to do, and he seems to take more interest in everything around him. To-day he proposed an improve-

ment in the lawn which strikes me as one which would add greatly to its beauty."

The conscience stricken servant spoke not; this was exactly the effect he had been warned would follow, if the medicine were not properly administered, a gradual quickening of the intellect, which, like the sudden blaze preceding the dying out of a lamp, would precede the complete extinction of his intellect.

Mr. Penryth did not return to his home after the disappointment he met with at St. George's. He allowed his mother and brother to return alone, and at once took his way to his brother's place in Devonshire. Improvements were going on there on a large scale, in draining and planting, Mr. Penryth intended to make the Devonshire property his principal residence, and he was having the house enlarged, and the gardens nearly doubled in size, and laid out on a scale of magnificence his fathers had never dreamt of.

Her son's immediate departure was rather a relief to the Countess, his temper, naturally proud and irritable, would, while the wound he had received was fresh, be more prone to irascibility than ever, if the news of his disappointment got abroad and drew upon him the ridicule or still harder to bear, the pity, of the world in which he lived. His trouble was not one he believed would be enduring, he had never failed in much that he set his mind on, and he had no idea of ultimate failure now. He was certainly in love with Ruby, but his love was tempered by craft. He had various ambitious designs, one of which was, to have the handsomest wife in England, of course she must also be of noble blood. In

Ruby he had found both qualifications, her face and form unrivalled, her blood the best in England, that of the old Saxon Kings. Lord Seymore was a man high in office, who, in Mr. Penryth's political schemes when he assumed his place in the House of Lords, which he hoped soon to do, could help him as few could. All this must not be given up without a struggle, merely for the whim of a girl of Ruby's age, who could not be supposed to know what was best for herself, besides had he not every reason to expect a favourable issue for his plans, if he had patience? Was not Lord Seymore quite as anxious for the marriage as he was himself?

Mr. Penryth after the first feeling of annoyance had passed away, was more inclined to look upon what had occurred as an unfortunate circumstance by which his marriage was delayed than anything else. After the first interview he had with Lord Seymore on his return to London, his mind was easy on the subject.

But there was one object very near his heart, and absolutely necessary to his happiness, one which he had never yet been able to accomplish, that was his mother's consent to his becoming curator for his brother in place of herself, to whom the Lord Chancellor had deputed the whole power.

The Countess on this point was invulnerable, every attempt he had made had failed utterly to move her one iota from what she declared was the settled purpose of her soul; Arthur's affairs should never be in the hands of any one but herself while she lived, and, in the event of her death taking place before Arthur's, certain documents had been prepared by order of the Chancellor,

signed and sealed by him, appointing others to the charge, in no case could the care of Arthur's affairs fall into the hands of his brother; she had more than once had a strong conviction that he was recovering, that he would yet be able to hold his own, but each time when he had shown a little more concentration, a little more interest in what was going on around him,—the things of yesterday, remembered and talked about to-day, it was but a passing gleam of sunshine amid showers, a flash of lightning, making the darkness seem more dark.

Mr. Penryth came home to make a fresh appeal to his mother to allow him to assume a place which he said was his own, at a more inauspicious moment than he dreamt of. His brother had not only proposed an improvement in the lawn, but described exactly how he should like to have it done; to the surprise of the gardener, taken one of the garden tools and marked out the form of the mound where moss and creepers were to be planted, and where, ferns and fox glove. The servants said one to another, surely Lord Sydenhault was going to get his wits again, and the poor blind mother felt a hush and quiet, as if the happiness and peace of past years were to be restored; she knew how in former seasons of almost returning reason she had nursed fallacious hopes, Oh, if she could see! She hoped in God the day would come when she would have her sight, her son his reason.

"Mother," Mr. Penryth began, "I have come to you again about getting me established in my rights, in short, to give me charge of my father's property; had my position been a recognized one, Miss Seymore, her father

assures me, would never have dared to trifle with me as has she done. My dear mother, you are a woman, and in your position as Countess of Sydenhault cannot understand the daily humiliation I suffer, that a whim may be indulged in. The false position I occupy among my peers, that a mad man may have a right he can never exercise, that he has not sense to understand."

"I have listened to all these arguments before, you cannot turn me from my purpose, which must ever be to protect one who cannot at present protect himself."

"That is as much as to say that I forget he is my brother, my nearest relative on earth, that he needs to be protected from me. You are aware he has been almost an idiot for eighteen years, and there is not the slightest chance of his recovery."

"On the contrary, I have never given up hopes of it."

"The meaning of all this is, that I am to spend my life in the same useless way in which I have been spending it since my father's death; had he lived to see one year of Arthur's imbecility, I should not have to ask you for my right; he was always just."

"You forget, Edward, your father never was Earl of Sydenhault, and his power over the land was only his right as my husband; I know what your father's mind on this point would have been; I am doing exactly as he would wish me to do were he able to speak so that I could hear."

Could Lady Sydenhault have seen the sinister look of hate with which her son regarded her as she spoke, it would have told her, more strongly than words could express, that no precaution she could take would be

superfluous in hedging in her weak minded son from the tender mercies of his grasping brother.

Mr. Penryth yawned a loud yawn, so that his blind mother might be aware of his having done so.

"I am tired of this idle useless life, I shall go abroad, and shall not return until Arthur's death. I am tired of playing a second part in the family of which I am really head."

Saying this, Edward Penryth, with all his vindictive passions aroused, left the room, taking the way to his own apartments through the picture gallery, which was anything but the direct way.

He fancied himself alone and unobserved, and, pacing up and down, swore and clenched his hands.

"I will not suffer this, — the foot-ball of an old woman in her dotage; I must be a greater idiot than my brother to bear it longer, — that imbecile shall be got out of my way by some means or other."

As he spoke he suddenly raised his head and gave several cuts, with a riding whip he held in his hand, to one of the pictures, inflicting evident marks of his wrath, upon it as if it were his enemy, a thing of life that could feel.

Brown, who was in his master's room, at the further end of the gallery, the door of which was partly open, stood, with eyes and ears equally alive, to the exhibition he witnessed of Edward Penryth's temper. In all his service he had never seen anything like this, he knew Mr. Penryth to be of a hard unforgiving disposition, hence he feared to anger him, but this mode of venting his wrath, the last words he had heard, made him think

and wonder. — 'That imbecile shall be got rid of by some means!' rang in his ears, as he went about his work in the broad day, — when he lay on his bed in the dark night.

Edward Penryth is in his own room. Not a trace of the passion which so lately disturbed him is to be seen. Brown is summoned to his presence.

Brown, you are particular in giving his Lordship his medicine?"

Brown shook with fear and shame as he answered,

"A tea spoonful twice a day, as was ordered."

"I fear it is losing its effects, you had better give a table spoonful three times a day. I fancied I saw a clear, restless look about his eyes as if he were trying to use his brains, a very little would wreck them entirely."

The truth was Edward Penryth had not seen his brother since his return, and this speech was only made to account for his desire that the usual dose of medicine should be increased. Had he looked in Brown's face while he spoke, he would at once have read, that there was something wrong, something to conceal; fortunately for the servant Mr. Penryth was occupied in looking over the recipe for the medicine which was jotted down in a memorandum book he always carried in his pocket. There was a large parcel on the table. "There," continued Edward Penryth "is another parcel of medicine; there is sufficient for six months, you will carefully observe to give a table spoonful each time."

"Yes, sir."

The parcel is carried to his room, the medicine care-

fully put into a compartment Brown has had made on purpose for it, so that another accident like the last cannot occur. The bottle containing the port wine and oil of cinnamon is placed on an upper shelf, and the conscience stricken man, who had for several days past noticed with fear and trembling that Lord Sydenhault was trying to use his brains, and that his eye was losing its stolid, heavy look, hurried to his master's apartment that he might give him his medicine.

Instead of moving about the balls of a solitaire, his usual occupation when alone, his master was reading when the servant entered with his medicine.

"Why do you give me a tablespoonful?" inquired he, adding, "the taste, too, seems different from the last."

Brown explained that the medicine was not strong enough, which was the reason why the dose had been increased, and inwardly thanked God he had now the right medicine, and not a counterfeit to give.

"What should I do," thought the poor man, "if he were to go raving mad? He is the kindest gentleman I ever knew, and, if he did go mad I should surely lose my place; I never could control a mad man; I wish I had risked it and told the truth. His eyes look to me wild like, for all he is so quiet; oh! I trust God will forgive me, and not visit my crime on him."

An hour afterwards Arthur's eyes were as vacant and dreamy, his mind as wandering and childish, as ever, satisfying Brown that the larger dose of medicine had done him good, and that there was now no fear of his becoming mad.

For an hour after her son's departure, the poor blind

Countess sat with her hands clasped tightly together resting on her knee, her eyelids fast shut over her sightless eyes, "God help me," said she, "and teach me what I ought to do, and give me firmness to keep in the right path; one child so good and true, and loving, the other—oh! I dare not think of what might be were I in my grave, and his poor brother in his power. He might be consigned to a mad-house, or worse still, to the care of a keeper whose conduct might be the more brutal because he was responsible to none but himself. It is time for thee Lord, now to work," said she, the bitterness of her soul forcing her to express the woe of her heart aloud, "send Thy counsel unto me, oh God! I am in a strait between two hard lines. The only child left me that I can reason with, will leave me alone in my old days, if this poor helpless one be not given up as a prey to the spoiler; God help me! With all my useless wealth, there is not a poor woman in London, who, if she knew all, would exchange places with the Countess of Sydenhault!"

Bitter tears fell thick and fast from her sightless eyes on the withered hands lying on her lap; she rose, and feeling her way to the door, locked it, and then kneeling down she prayed to God for strength and aid, and He who heareth His people when they cry unto Him, sent her the grace and strength she sought, until her feet were out of the fearful pit, out of the miry clay.

"Come, Arthur, I wish to go with you to that new bed with the rock work you suggested to Roger for the lawn, he has sent word it is completed, lead me out like a good fellow."

As the Countess spoke to her idiot son, he stared

vacantly for a second or two, as if wondering what she meant, and then replied in the slow, silly way in which he generally spoke.

"What new bed?"

"Don't you remember, Arthur, about a week ago, just the day after we were at church with Edward, that you proposed a bed of rock work with moss grown stones and ferns, trailing deer's horn moss, and fox gloves, and all wild wood plants as a variety among the other beds?"

"No, mother," with his silly, grave face, "I don't remember."

The old pang, which she had had so many long years, came back to the Countess' heart.

"But you remember the church and Edward, and the white faced bride, and the two clergymen, the old one with the white hair, who looked with such sad eyes on the bride, and when he shut the book for the last time gave Lord Seymore such a fierce, angry glance; you remember all this, don't you, dear?"

Arthur had told his mother all that she spoke of, and she repeated his account of the wedding as nearly as possible in his own words.

"No, mother, I don't remember any church except that one," and he pointed to where through an oriel window, they could see the church to which the blind woman daily took her son, that with his hand clasped in hers, she might kneel at God's altar, and beseech Him to restore to this dearly loved one, her eldest born, the strength of body and clearness of mind he had possessed for twenty-five years.

"Dear Arthur, you remember the man behind the

pillar that looked like the boy we saw on the quay at Sydenhault Oaks?"

"Oh!—yes—" replied he in an undecided way, as if he was trying to think of something which eluded the slight grasp his poor weak mind was capable of taking, "I remember the boy with the beautiful mouth; whose mouth was that, mother?"

"I don't know, Arthur, try if you can think of it yourself."

"I am always trying to remember, but I cannot, it makes my head ache when I think of the pretty mouth and the blue eyes."

The poor Countess pressed her hand upon her sightless eyes as she said to herself; "I fear it is that pretty mouth, and those blue eyes that have scattered my darling boy's wits."

As her finger pressed her eyelids above the sightless orbs, a slight movement was perceptible to her sensitive touch, her heart gave one great throb,—could it be? It was surely too good news to be true, the eyelids are pressed again,—the motion is more perceptible than at first,—thank God, thank God!

She rings, a servant answers.

"Order the carriage with all haste, send Brown here."

In a second or two Brown is in the room.

"I wait your Ladyship's commands."

"Bring your master's hat and gloves, he is going out driving with me."

The Countess and her son are in the carriage, the coachman on the box.

"Where to, my Lady?" asks the footman, before he takes his place on the footboard behind the carriage, touching his hat as he speaks.

"To Sir James Clark's, St. James Square."

Mr. Penryth stood at the window of his apartment, as her Ladyship and his brother entered the carriage, and ground his teeth, looking after them as they drove off. His servant was busily employed packing up for his master's departure.

"I shall not return until she sends for me, I fancy I have hit upon what will bring her to terms," he muttered between his teeth.

Long before his mother's return to the Villa, Edward Penryth was gone; gone, that he might punish the mother who had watched over his infant years, wept and prayed over the faults of his youth and manhood, loved him through all; gone, that by his absence, and her own unprotected loneliness, she might be forced into unconscious participation in his diabolical plans.

What short sighted creatures we are! Had Edward Penryth known where his mother had gone and for what purpose, he would have set himself down in the Bayswater villa to wait the issue of that important interview, the result of which was to influence all his own future.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE HERMIT'S CAVE.

"LOOK, Ruby, at that bed of geraniums, how beautiful it is, the scarlet flowers so close together, that they almost hide the green leaves; come and let us pick a basketful and adorn one of the drawing rooms entirely with scarlet and green."

The speaker was Mrs. Ponsonby, the time a September evening, the daylight fading slowly into night, the scene a balcony attached to one of the drawing rooms in the villa at Bayswater, and projecting, more than balconies usually do, out on the lawn, thus giving it size enough to contain a small table, several low chairs, a couple of large oleanders in full bloom, the branches of which, but for the sloping roof of the balcony, would have mixed themselves with the waving boughs of a Lombardy poplar which towered above, almost shading that part of the villa.

"Yes," replied Ruby, "that will be charming, I will go and get a basket and a pair of scissors, and be with you in a moment."

The cousins were quickly by the geranium bed, denuding it of its richest flowers, its most beautifully variegated green and brown leaves.

"I love these geraniums so much," said Ruby, they

remind me of Thaniel Reil's cottage, with the windows filled with geraniums and carnations."

Ethel smiled, looking in her cousin's face with a comical expression as she said, "Thaniel Reil's geraniums! You must have a more vivid imagination than I gave you credit for, to enable you to convert the poverty stricken, straggling looking stumps, with one flower and half a dozen leaves at the end of each long bare branch, into these gorgeous looking flowers with leaves as thick as velvet."

"These are more beautiful, it is true, but I loved the others better; I was far happier at dear old Seymore castle than ever I have been here, I wish we were all back there again."

"Wish for yourself, my sweet cousin, I am of a contented disposition, I prefer to remain where I am. Oh! the dreary old place," said Mrs. Ponsonby with an affected little shudder, "where, except in September and October, we never saw a fresh face, from year's end to year's end. Here comes Ernest, we will refer it to him. Ernest, there has been a proposition made that we should all return to Seymore castle, what do you say?"

"I beg to be excused from joining the family party. You are surely not serious! The horrid old place, it reminds me of what we used at Rugby to call a one horse mud hole."

"The votes are against you, Ruby, so I fancy we shan't go back to Seymore this year;" said her cousin, laughing in her usual merry way.

The basket was full with its wealth of scarlet flowers, and the cousins took their way towards the balcony,

there to arrange them into bouquets for the drawing room.

"Just come with me one moment, Ethel," said her husband, "I wish to show you a kennel I have here in the copse with two deer hound pups that bid fair to be grand fellows;" saying this, he held out his finger to Ethel, who, taking it, followed him, promising to join Ruby in a few minutes.

Ruby having reached the balcony, seated herself on a fauteuil, and immediately began her task of arranging the geraniums into masses of scarlet, fringed with green. She observed that the silk curtains separating the balcony from the room had been drawn, and the chandelier lit inside; there were voices talking in the room, and she, involuntarily, stopped for a moment, as she fancied she heard her father's voice.

Ere she could assure herself that it was his voice she heard, the words ceased, but the person who had been speaking continued walking up and down the room with heavy steps, a habit of her father's when he was troubled.

Another voice she knew well, that of Edward Penryth, came from the other end of the room in deep low tones — she could only hear detached sentences.

"Such a terrible insult — so wholly undeserved — nothing but my love for her"—

Ruby's hands, filled with the scarlet blossoms dropped into her lap, her heart felt faint and sick; she knew against whom these accusations were made. The time was come now, or would very shortly come when she must again refuse obedience to the commands of her

only parent, or consent to forswear herself, to lead a life of self reproach and misery with one she despised.

Mr. Penryth was still speaking, but she resolutely closed her ears to his words.— He stopped, there was a long pause, so long that but for her father's heavy tread, as he paced backwards and forwards in the room, she might have fancied they had both departed.

At last Lord Seymore spoke, in a voice such as she had never heard him use, with low and measured tones, expressing such determination of purpose, that it seemed as if death alone could deter him from putting his words into execution.

"Penryth, this shall not be,— I swear to you by my honour, that before the snows of winter fall, my daughter shall be your bride; and I make this oath for her sake, more than from a sense of justice to you, the sickly—"

Ruby heard no more, she rose from her seat, the scarlet blossoms falling to the ground, paused an instant, leaning with both hands upon the table as if she would wait to gain strength, and then, like a frightened bird that hears the gun of the fowler, she fled to her own apartment, bolting the door behind her, as if in that act lay all her safety.

On the twentieth of August, when his daughter was carried from the altar to her carriage, insensible, her father was inconsolable; in his heart cursing his own folly, which he then believed had killed his child. An hour afterwards, when her physician assured him that the blood which frightened them all so terribly, came from a small vessel in the throat, and that the lesion was of no consequence, he thanked God for the escape he had had.

A week afterwards, when he saw Ruby walking on the lawn apparently as well as ever, his ambition returned sevenfold, even as the devils came to the man out of whom one was cast, and then he vowed unto himself a solemn oath that she should be Countess of Sydenhault.

Ruby had only seen her father twice since the memorable twentieth of August, but upon neither occasion did he speak to her, she had been told by Ethel that her uncle proposed spending the early part of the winter abroad, and that she, Ruby, was to accompany him. Even while her cousin was telling her of the arrangement, she shrank from the journey, now she saw this ill-starred marriage was destined to take place abroad!

She sank down on a low chair, and, with a resolute will, strove to calm her mind, that she might at once resolve what course to pursue; she had been speaking within an hour to Ethel, of Seymore Castle, thinking of the love and affection she had received there, and her mind naturally ran in the same direction, her resolution was taken, she would go to her aunt, her woman's heart would see and understand all, as a man's never could.

She rose from her seat and kneeling down, prayed for God's blessing, that He would teach her what was best to be done, and lead her in His way.

She rose from her knees, soothed in spirit, and her mind composed, she believed that her Heavenly Father hea[illegible]d and approved of her desire to go to her aunt, and sat down thinking over in what way she could attain her desire. A light tap at the room door, and Ethel's soft voice aroused her.

"Ruby, let me in. Did you know my uncle was here

Ruby? He and Mr. Penryth have been here for more than an hour."

Ethel's heart smote her as she spoke, she knew they had come to arrange about the tour through Italy to Naples; she also knew for what purpose that tour was to be made; if she could have averted this marriage by any sacrifice, she would have done so, now that she knew how distasteful Mr. Penryth was to Ruby; that her dread of and dislike to him were such, that could he offer her a crown she would not touch his hand. Ethel bitterly repented the words she had spoken to her uncle in favor of this marriage; needless regret, her approval, or disapproval, would not have weighed as a grain of sand; this marriage had been the first wish of Lord Seymore's heart for years; now, it was the settled purpose of his life. That accomplished, he fancied he would be willing to lie down and die.

"Yes, I heard my father and Mr. Penryth speaking when I came to the balcony with the flowers, that was the reason I came here; I wished to avoid seeing Mr. Penryth. I would give up my birthright of Seymore Castle, dear as the place is to me, to be certain I should never see him again."

"Ruby, your father came to-night to say that he has decided to leave England to-morrow, we must be ready to start at ten o'clock.

Ruby did not speak, but her face paled, its lines becoming almost rigid; while her heart beat in great wild throbs; "Ethel, if you know, tell me why this visit to the Continent is so hastily determined on, and for what purpose we are going."

"Ruby, you can surely understand why we are going to the Continent in company with Mr. Penryth. Your father has never concealed from you what is the first wish of his heart, the great desire of his life. Were I to say more I should compromise myself with my uncle; you would not wish me to do so were it only for mamma's sake; she has a happy and comfortable home at Seymore, it would be no longer a home for her if my uncle had any reason to suppose I either did or said anything which could, in the least, influence you in opposing his wishes."

Ruby looked at her watch, it was still early, but she did not wish to speak more on this subject with her cousin, and she knew it was one on which both their minds were dwelling. If they remained together, nothing else would be spoken of, and she was determined that on the morrow, Ethel should be able to say, "I can tell nothing, I suspected nothing."

"Ethel, I have a long letter to write which must be written to-night. I have arrangements to make which Monica cannot make for me; will you forgive me if I ask you to say good night?"

"Good night, Ruby."

Before Ethel could open the room door in departing, Ruby was by her side with both arms clasped round her cousin's neck. Ethel often thought in after years how fondly Ruby had kissed her again and again, that night.

Ruby bolted her room door satisfied that she should not again be disturbed. On finding the door bolted, Monica would make all arrangements for the morning's journey without referring to her young mistress for orders. She

determined to write to her father, and tell him what she felt, more clearly than she could tell him in speaking to him; to ask his forgiveness for the step she was about to take, and to assure him of her unchanged love.

She wrote page after page only to tear, and throw them into the waste paper basket by the side of her toilet table, until at last, after the clock had told her the morning hours were begun, she hopelessly gave up her task.

Taking a pair of scissors she cut off one of her curls, and putting it in an envelope she said to herself, "this will speak for me better than any written words can." The envelope was addressed to her father, and laid on her unruffled pillow; she feared to sleep, lest she should awake in the broad daylight, when it would be impossible for her to make her escape unseen.

Her watch told her it was now three o'clock, she would have time to reach the wharf by five, the hour the boat for Sydenhault Oaks sailed; and lifting up the parcel, containing a change of linen, which she had prepared, she walked softly from her chamber, pausing for a moment at the door of Monica's room, Monica who loved her as a mother, whom she loved so dearly. The door was ajar, the night light on the floor, she looked in; Monica was in a deep sleep, two large trunks, packed with Ruby's travelling dresses, open in the room, telling how her nurse had been employed far into the night. Ruby's heart almost failed her, she was going to wander out into the world alone, to leave all this wealth of affection behind her, how did she know what reception she would meet with; yet it was her only chance of escape

from a fate worse than death. Better far lie down and die on St. Wolfgang's rock, than wed Edward Penryth; even now she was tampering with her fate; should Monica's eyes unclose, what would be the consequence?

She took from her finger a ring which she had worn from early girlhood, and slipping through it one of the handkerchiefs lying on the trunk beside which she stood; she went to Monica's bedside, and placed it on her pillow, looking wistfully at the dear, familiar old face, by the dim light of the night lamp.

The door bolts are drawn silently; the chain noiselessly placed on its hook. Ruby is outside, and the door, without a creak, is closed as firmly as she dared.

In the drive, just in front of the steps leading from the door, lay a great Newfoundland dog sent to Ruby while she was at school by Hugh Reil, who had brought him as a pet from Newfoundland.

He lay there beating the ground with his bushy tail, and scraping with his fore-paws, delighted to see his mistress.

"Good Nep, good Nep," said Ruby, patting the great broad forehead with its bunch of flat curls; she was in terror lest he should make the least noise, one bark from Nep would have brought Colonel Ponsonby to the window of his room which overlooked the drive, and every servant in the house round to the door.

Nep rose and followed his mistress leisurely across the lawn to a postern gate close by the lodge. This gate was only fastened by a bar inside, and, opening it, Ruby with Nep following her, was soon out on the road.

She then, for the first time, realized that she had left

her home, her father's care, and that she was out on the wide world alone, and she asked herself the startling question, "what was she to do if she found that her aunt feared to shelter her?" She stood still, half inclined to return and enter the house as noiselessly as she had left it; the postern gate was only on the latch, the house door merely closed, no one would ever know she had been outside her own room.

For some minutes she stood irresolute, and then came thoughts of the morrow's journey, of him who was to accompany them,— this was enough, she could brave anything to avoid that bitter doom; better to wander in Seymore woods till she died, no fate seemed so hard as the one she would be consigned to, were she to return to her home.

She now hurried on, impelled by a fear that Monica would go into her room, as she often did during the night, and finding it empty, give the alarm. If she were in Bayswater she would be sure to be overtaken and brought back. The idea gave an impulse to her steps which made them quicken as if she were already conscious of being pursued.

It was not until after many misgivings as to whether she was in the right way, and much careful investigation of the streets, and of the shops, that at last, wearied out with the distance she had walked, it dawned upon her that she ought to take a cab, which she did, and in an hour found herself at Hores wharf.

It was well for her that it was early morn, so early, that scarcely a sailor, and not one of the men employed on the wharf was abroad. She had often driven down

to the quay whence the little steamer running between London and Sydenhault Oaks started, just that Ethel and she might look at it, it reminded them of home, the home, that, dull as Ethel thought it would be as an abiding place, she loved dearly, and would gladly, now and then have gone to visit. She had been there once or twice before Ruby left school, since then such a thing was out of the question, she well knew why.

Ruby knew the little steamer, and the days on which it came and went; yet she trembled lest she had made a mistake. Should she find herself alone in the streets of London, the vessel gone, what could she do? Once on board the steamer, she would be safe.

It lay alongside the quay, there it was, "The Athelgoda" painted in large letters on the side, the effigy of the Saxon Queen for a figure head.

One or two sailors were on deck busy preparing for their departure in the grey light of the autumn morning; one of them, the mate, saw Ruby standing looking wistfully at the gangway as if she would like to go on board, yet feared to do so. He at once came down to the quay, offering to help her on deck, if such were her desire. In a few minutes she was on board, in the stateroom allotted to her, lying on the sofa, with wearied limbs and closed eyes, Nep stretched on the floor beside her.

Ruby was faint and weary, and for some time lay there unconscious of anything save a sweet feeling of security. For a time at least she was safe from Mr. Penryth. She slept a sound and heavy sleep induced by want of repose during the past night, and by the unwonted fatigue joined to the fear which made her heart

flutter with dread, since she had overheard her father's words to her dreaded suitor. When she awoke it was broad day, and she felt the motion of the vessel as it sped swiftly on, and could both feel and hear the footsteps of the sailors passing to and fro overhead.

In that sound sleep she had forgotten all about her flight through the dark streets of London, she only felt there was some heavy, undefined trouble that weighed on her heart, and it was several moments ere with widely open eyes she realized where she was, and why she was there.

When she was thoroughly awake to her position, her first impulse was to lift up her soul in grateful thanks to her Heavenly Father for the deliverance from a fate she dreaded worse than death.

She next drew from her bosom what she treasured most, one of the white things she would ever keep, a letter from Herbert Sydney, given her by Jasper, the first day her convalescence enabled her to walk out unattended on the lawn.

She read, over and over, each passionate word, each fond protestation of enduring love, the last line so full of hope for her, 'I have now climbed the first step on the ladder of fame, a few more steps will enable me to gain a position and to claim my love.'

"The Athelgoda" has touched the wharf at Sydenhault Oaks, the town clock tells the ninth hour, it is very dark, no light on the wharf, save that which hangs above the deck of the little vessel, and a lantern carried by a servant girl who is in attendance on a lady. As soon as the gangway is let down, the lady comes on board, and

speaks to the Captain. Ruby remembers the accents of that voice although heard only once before.

"You have a parcel for me sent by my son?"

"Yes, Mar'm, here it is, a small affair, but, I suppose very precious, he gave it into my own hands with many charges."

"Was Mr. Sydney sea-sick?"

"No, Mar'm," an indignant no, "he might go from here to the Indies for that, walked the deck day and night, never went below."

"Not day and night, I hope," said the lady, "he surely slept while on board?"

"I believe he did throw himself on one of the benches for a few hours, but he's none of your men who coddle themselves up, some chaps take as much trouble inquiring about their beds as if they was ladies."

For a moment Ruby was terribly tempted, two words whispered in that lady's ear would insure her a hearty welcome, and safe keeping in her house. She had already begun to fear that her aunt might take the same view of her marriage with Mr. Penryth, that Lord Seymore did, if so, Seymore Castle was no home for her. But the few minutes during which Mrs. Sydney spoke to the Captain, gave her time for reflection, she knew from Ethel that her father suspected her attachment to "the schoolmaster" as he always called the young painter; his mother's house therefore would be one of the first places in which Lord Seymore would imagine she had sought refuge. In what a painfnl position would it place Mrs. Sydney should Ruby's father come there, demanding

that his daughter should be given up to him. It was not to be thought of for a moment.

Ruby had an idea that her father would not suspect that she had gone to Seymore; and even if he did suspect it, and came to seek her, she hoped her aunt would plead her cause. Mrs. Wolferstan had great influence with her brother, she might be able to persuade him at least to postpone the marriage for a year or two. Anything like a respite would be eagerly seized on by Ruby. Should her fears of Mrs. Wolferstan viewing her marriage in the same light as her father did, prove correct, she would then hide herself in Seymore Forest; at the worst she could but die, anything rather than that hated marriage.

Nep was by her side, she slipped out on to the dark quay; how homelike everything looked, she seemed to know the very stones on the street as she walked along, the light streaming, at intervals, from shop doors and windows, the men selling inside the counters, the people purchasing, all seemed old familiar friends. She knew each face, could tell their names, had known them from her childhood, as she walked day by day with Monica through the village streets.

She is at Seymore Castle. The postern gate there is never either locked or barred, the click of its latch is as familiar to Ruby as the ticking of her watch; she is walking up the drive, and turns her steps round by the western wing, where there is a room devoted to the use of Mrs. Wolferstan's children, with a door leading out into the lawn, by which they could run in and out at will. This door is only barred the last thing at night, it communicates

with the room where Captain and Mrs. Wolferstan generally pass their evenings, she will wait in this play-room until she can see her aunt alone; she can easily effect this, Captain Wolferstan always smokes on the lawn before going to bed.

Ruby's heart is beating fast; at times with hope, at times with fear; she remembers how kind and good her aunt had always been even before she came to live at Seymore Castle, almost as kind as Monica; as she thinks of this her hopes rise. As she passes the drawing-room windows, she stays her steps for a moment or two; only the lace curtains are drawn, she can see everything inside; the crimson cloth on the table, the candelabrum with its many wax lights, the pictures on the walls, all old friends, all so dear. Her aunt is alone, employed in crochet, or some such work, which she lays upon the table for a moment and flattens down with her hand; a pleased look passes over her face; the work is what she wishes it to be.

Everything was so familiar and homelike, that, for a moment, Ruby forgot she had ever quitted the old walls, — that she was now about to enter the home of her childhood almost as a suppliant for protection. Now is the time for her to go in and tell her aunt all. She has reached the second window on her way to the play-room, when she sees Captain Wolferstan enter; he seems troubled, and throws an open letter on the table; he is standing opposite the window through which she looks into the room; his face has a stern expression she never saw, it wear before; involuntarily she draws back from

the window, the play-room door is open, — Ruby is inside in an instant.

The room is without light, except a single ray which comes from the drawing-room door which is a little ajar. Dark or light, Ruby knows the room well, the place she called especially her own, in her happy childhood; and trembling with fear, excited by the stern, troubled look on Captain Wolferstan's face, she throws herself on a sofa placed behind the door, through which comes the ray of light.

She hears words, she is somehow prepared to hear, and yet they make her tremble, and seem to paralyse her whole being.

"Eleanor, there is a telegram from Godfrey; Ruby is gone,— has left her father's house,— no one knows whither."

She hears her aunt reply in a startled voice,

"Charles! what can be the meaning of this? Monica must be with her. Shew me the telegram."

Mrs. Wolferstan reads aloud,

"Eight o'clock, Saturday morning. Ruby is gone, no one knows where, gave no hint to Monica,— the woman frantic,— she has most likely gone to Seymore. If no tidings of her before night, I will be at Seymore by the ten o'clock train."

"Poor Godfrey! what an awful thing, what can be the meaning of this?" said Mrs. Wolferstan, in a voice fraught with emotion.

"The meaning of it is very obvious, her father is determined she shall marry Penryth, the girl hates him and will not sell herself for his gold or land. She has

gone off with young Sydney who was here for some days, and left for London by the Athelgoda. The evening my sister went to take Julia to school, I shook hands with him on board, he told me he was on his way to Paris where he resides. Godfrey had better go there instead of coming here.',

"Heaven grant you may be mistaken, I am sure you are, Ruby never would do that."—The trembling listener could have worshipped her aunt for these words; a reaction came as Mrs. Wolferstan continued,—"If she has; there is an end forever to her marriage with Mr. Penryth."

"In my opinion," returned her husband, "that is the best thing that could happen. It is a shameful affair this, forcing a girl to marry a man she abhors; and if she has made a low marriage with young Sydney, Godfrey has himself to blame for it. The girl is beautiful beyond any one I ever saw, if he had left her alone, the fancy for this young fellow would have died out, and she could no doubt marry a nobleman any day. But to force on a marriage with this man, who might be her father, was absolutely horrible. Godfrey deserves what he has got."

"How can you talk in that way, Charles," said Mrs. Wolferstan, speaking in louder, more excited tones, than Ruby had ever heard her use, "that, Godfrey is one of the best of fathers, his whole life testifies. Almost any other man left a widower before he was thirty, would have married again; and now, what is it that he strives to gain by this marriage? Not anything for himself certainly, but to place her as far as possible in the posi-

tion of the old Seberts from whom she is descended. If the girl were not dead to every spark of right feeling she would never have objected to the marriage, if it were only to please a father who has sacrificed all for her."

"What nonsense! What sacrifice has the man made for her?"

"His whole life has been one great sacrifice. Would you have remained unmarried for Ethel's sake if I had died when she was born?"

"I don't think I should; I am a social man, Godfrey is the reverse. I should have married again to please myself, he remained unmarried for the same reason."

"It is well you had not the chance," returned Mrs. Wolferstan in a pettish tone, "but it is worse than useless talking in this way now; what can we do to help poor Godfrey? Do you think it would be possible to find out from the mother if Ruby has really thrown herself away on that tutor fellow? If she has, she richly deserves to be cast on the world without a penny, which unfortunately my brother cannot do, she was born heiress of Seymore, and the money was her mother's; Godfrey has only power over it in the event of her death, which, if she has married that fortune hunting fellow, may be the best thing that can happen, she will certainly repent her conduct bitterly before six months are passed."

Ruby started up, she would go and tell her aunt that she would willingly make over every penny of her fortune to her father, sign away even her right to Seymore Castle itself if such a thing were possible.

Her hand was on the lock of the door, she was about

to pull it open when she was diverted from her purpose by these words.

"Eleanor, you talk at random, Mr. Sydney is well aware Ruby cannot inherit one penny of her mother's fortune if she marries without her father's consent. As to Seymore Castle, Godfrey is some fifty years of age, you are a long lived race you Seymores, if he lives another forty as more than one of his forefathers have, how long a lease will Ruby and her fortune hunting lover have of Seymore Castle with its barren rocks by the sea-shore, its forest land that shelters only the fox and the badger? This is simply nonsense. The man is fast making a name for himself, that if he can follow up his present success, will raise him higher in the opinion of his fellows, and make him a greater man than any Seymore since the days of old King Sebert. At the same time, an alliance with a struggling man is not desirable for a girl like Ruby, and must be prevented if possible. Mrs. Sydney, with her maid and lantern, as is her fashion when she goes abroad at night, passed me just as I entered the gate, she cannot yet be in bed, I will go and see what she knows, or, at all events, what she is willing to tell, of Ruby's whereabouts. This telegram has been a long time in reaching us; if Godfrey has not found his daughter, or gained any tidings of her, he will be here in half an hour, I shall be back again with all the news it is possible to obtain from Mrs. Sydney by that time."

Ruby clasped her hands in fervent thankfulness that she had not communicated with Mrs. Sydney by word or sign.

"Go," replied his wife, "and while you are gone I will stretch myself on the sofa for a few minutes repose, I know Godfrey too well to hope to lay my head on my pillow, if he comes here to-night; Heigh-ho," continued she, sighing as if she needed sleep as well as repose. "Who could have thought that such a sweet child as Ruby, would have grown up to be the disobedient, self-willed girl she is, breaking the hearts of us all."

Ruby crept from the play-room, and remained for a second or two outside, with her hand on Nep's neck keeping him quiet, until she heard the click of the latch as Captain Wolferstan closed the postern door when he passed out.

It was a hard task for Ruby to leave the old grey walls thus, the place where she was born and bred; but there was no other resource, it were better to lie down and die within the Hermit's Cave in Seymore forest, guarded by Neptune, than to live as Edward Penryth's wife.

She has been walking for hours up those thickly wooded hills, through those tangled brakes; the moon is high in the Heavens, and here and there, where the trees part for a few inches, it is shining brightly down. She sees the great mossy stone in front of the Cave,—climbs over it, Nep jumps in before her, the goal is won! Her strength is gone, she has tasted no food since she left Bayswater; fasting and fatigue have done their work. Ruby sinks, almost fainting, to the ground, among the withered leaves that the winds have blown into the Hermit's Cave.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE TELEGRAM.

CAPTAIN WOLFERSTAN on his return from Mrs. Sydney's, met Lord Seymore at the castle gate. From what he had gathered from Herbert's mother it was clear she knew nothing of Ruby's movements, and he tried to persuade his brother-in-law that a visit there would be useless.

But it was in vain to talk to Lord Seymore, he had made up his mind that Ruby had, in some way, been spirited away by "The Schoolmaster," and nothing would convince him of the contrary.

Mrs. Sydney's quiet household was a second time disturbed. She remembered well the beautiful girl who brought Herbert the flowers one Spring morning, years ago, and whose visit seemed to have brought health, like a charm, to her sick son; and she felt sore at heart for the poor father who had lost his child in such a mysterious way; picturing to herself what her own feelings would have been if Herbert had disappeared in such a sudden manner, and he a man who could take care of himself, not a helpless girl.

Lord Seymore at once began his questions, without the few ceremonial words, which, in a different mood would have occured to him at once, as being absolutely necessary.

"Madam, I have come to find out from you, if possible, whether your son has been concerned in the abduction of my daughter who left my home last night or early this morning? I am Lord Seymore," said he, recalled to a slight sense of propriety by the look of unfeigned astonishment, and the lady-like demeanor of the person he addressed, "I believe my brother-in-law, Colonel Wolferstan, has explained to you the distress we are all in, owing to the sudden disappearance of my daughter, who, we have reason to believe, has been carried off from my house in Bayswater, by your son."

Mrs. Sydney's concentrativeness of character enabled her at once to see the simplest way out of the dilemma in which she was placed; she heard Lord Seymore, first in his almost insolent, and afterwards, in the half apologetic tone, in which he made the accusation against her son, with perfect patience, and then said,

"Before answering you, I will ask you a question, as your answer may enable me to tell you whether your surmise is founded on truth or not. At what hour last night was your child seen in your house?"

"At nine o'clock. Her cousin, Mrs. Ponsonby, parted with her in Miss Seymore's own room; until twelve, her nurse, who has been her faithful attendant from her birth, heard her moving there."

Mrs. Sydney went to her desk, and taking from it a telegram, placed it in Lord Seymore's hands.

He read, "*Paris, Friday, eleven o'clock, P.M. At home all safe. Herbert Sydney.*"

Lord Seymore read the words twice over, and then handed the telegram to Captain Wolferstan, as if he

thought his brother-in-law's coolness might find something there, which his own disturbed heart and brain prevented him from discerning.

"This is painfully conclusive," said Colonel Wolferstan, "Ruby would never have gone to him, he could not have come to London for her, and been in Paris at the same hour."

"Will you give me your son's address," asked Lord Seymore."

"I will with pleasure, both that of his studio, and his boarding-house."

Going to her desk, Mrs. Sydney wrote her son's address in an elegant Italian hand, and presented it to Lord Seymore; it was received with a polite bow; and the brothers took their departure, leaving Mrs. Sydney to muse over the strange visit she had received, the strangest part of which to her was the idea, entertained by Ruby's Father, that her son had anything to do with his daughter's disappearance.

Some considerable time after they had gone, she remembered the young lady she had seen an hour previous on board the little steamer, dressed in grey; grey dress, grey hat and veil, and who, as she passed in the line of light cast from the binnacle, she had observed looking at herself so earnestly. She recollected how the face struck her, as one of peculiar sweetness, and awoke pleasant, though ill-defined reminiscences, as of a face she had seen before, connected with some pleasant memory.

"Yes," thought she, "it must be so. The young lady is, of course, in her father's house by this time, he will

have found her there before him on his return, his care and anxiety are all over ere now."

While Mrs. Sydney was communing thus with herself, Lord Seymore was being carried by express speed, over the London road on his way to Paris, to judge for himself if "The School-master" knew anything of his daughter.

"Where is Godfrey?" asked Mrs. Wolferstan, as her husband entered the room, shutting the door as he came in.

"He met me at the gate on my return from Mrs. Sydney's, having just arrived by the ten o'clock train, and not satisfied with the result of my visit to the lady, went himself to make inquiries in person. From Mrs. Sydney he obtained her son's address, and is now off, on a wild goose chase to Paris, expecting to find Ruby there, although, at the time she must have left London, Mrs. Sydney received a telegram from her son dated at Paris, which she shewed to me and your brother."

"And he has gone off without rest or refreshment! He'll kill himself," exclaimed Mrs. Wolferstan in evident alarm; "Godfrey is always so positive, when he takes anything into his head. Ruby would never think of such a thing, she will most likely come here, and may at this moment be in her own room or somewhere in the castle, if she is not here she will have gone to St. John's wood: what could tempt the man to make such a fool of himself and his family?"

"Exactly what tempts all the Seymore's to consider their own judgment infallible," said Colonel Wolferstan

dryly, "not that they have ever found it so, but, merely from the fact of their being Seymore's. Infallibility is their birthright."

Before her husband had ceased speaking, Mrs. Wolferstan, had with a look of indignation, which she took particular pains he should see, departed on her fruitless quest of Ruby through the castle.

CHAPTER XV.

THANIEL REIL'S SEARCH AMONG THE ROCKS.

IT is Sunday morning. Thaniel Reil and his family are seated at their frugal breakfast, when the door, which is not latched, is pushed open by the nose and paws of a great Newfoundland dog.

"There, father," cried Haco, "is the dog we were speaking about, he has been here every day since Wednesday, I am sure it is Nep that Hugh brought from Newfoundland."

"How can that be?" returned his father, the dog is in London wi' Miss Seymore, look if the flat of his paws be white."

"Ay, they are that," said Haco, "I thought about that yesterday, look"—the boy lifted up one of the dog's paws, shewing the white pad as he spoke.

"May be there's some o' t'folks frae London at the castle, an' the dog's down wi' un."

"That's not like," replied Haco, he comes here for meat, an' he's wild wi' hunger, he wouldn' be that, gin he was biding up at the castle, look at un how he snaps the bread out o' my hand."

"Lord Seymore was at the castle on Saturday last," said the fisherman's wife; "he came wi' the ten o'clock train on Saturday night, an' left wi' the midnight. There's trouble up at the castle I'm thinking. I saw

Geoffrey yesterday, he says there's no been much pleasure there, or up in London either, since the marriage wi' Mr. Penryth went back. It's a pity Miss Seymore would na' ha' made up her mind to marry Mr. Penryth when the Baron was so bent on't."

"It's no a bit pity," exclaimed her husband and Haco in one breath, "but it would be a great pity," continued the old man, "if one like her 'ats the beauty of the whole country, an' as good as she's bonny, wad marry a man auld enough to be her feyther, an' ane that his very servants canno' abide.—Where's the dog off to? Run, Haco, after him, an' see gin he takes the road to the Castle. That's queer, he 's ta'en a ship biscuit in his mouth."

Haco did as his father said, speeding after the dog past the cottage windows, up in the direction of the hills.

The other boys had finished eating their breakfast, and gone out, before the dog made his appearance. 'Thaniel and his wife were alone in the house. Looking cautiously around to assure herself there was no one within hearing, Mrs. Reil said in a low tone,

"Geoffrey says that Miss Seymore has run away from her feyther, it was after her that his Lordship came on Saturday night, but they dinna' let the servants get wit there was anything more than usual, Sir Godfrey thinks he'll get her back an' married off hand, and nobody the wiser."

"If they were no to let the servants hear 'ot, what way did Geoffrey hear word o't?"

"My brother's no like a common servant,' ' said Mrs.

Reil, with not a little indignation in her tone, "he was in the house, him and Jasper both afore my Lord was born; what he hears nobody else will; I wad 'na hae heard this frae him, but they thought that maybe she would hae come down here, an' gone to Jersey wi' Hugh's vessel, an' when he was questioning me about who ga'ed an' who didna' go, he thought I was close like, an' that she was sure enough gone to Jersey, an' so it came out that way, thinking I knew better than himsel' all about her."

"Well, my lass, ye'll see the young leddy's hidden someway here about the rocks, an' the dog's wi' her; the poor child 'll die there wi' hunger and cauld; I'll just wander down about t' rocks an' see gin I canna' spy her out, but mind, Marion, no ae word of this t' Geoffrey or t'any other body, I wad as soon cut off my right hand as help to make that bonny child marry Mr. Penryth; all's no gold 'at glitters wi' that man, or my name's no 'Thaniel Reil."

The fisherman and his wife went to the cottage door, turning to the line of rocks that formed a barrier between the coast and the sea, the many caves and hollows of which were well known to Reil, who had spent nearly forty years in their vicinity. There were many of these caves which would form good hiding places, but concealment there, would most likely, as 'Thaniel Reil had said, end in death from cold or hunger.

Ere the fisherman had taken many steps in the direction of the coast, Haco returned, almost breathless,

"I followed the dog up to the upper town, and lost him there, I wasna' able to run wi' him; when he comes again I'll tie a string to his collar, an' follow him by it."

"We didna' think o' his collar," said the woman, "it wad tell if he's the Baron's dog."

"I dinna think there's ony writing on the collar, if there is I didna' see't," replied the boy, "the dog did'na take the road to the Castle, I think he made for Seymore Forest."

"Go down by the rocks, Haco, an' tell your father the road the dog took, an' tell him it's near Church time."

Haco went to do his mother's bidding, but his father was out of sight in some of the numerous caves or passages that seemed as if they were the work of human hands, many of which were the subjects of legends connecting them with the time when the Danish Sea Kings were the terror of the more peace loving inhabitants of the country.

The church bell rang, and the people went to pray, and hear the word of God, and all returned again to their homes, ere the old fisherman came back.

"There is no a cave or a hiding place on the coast till ye come to the yellow sands, but I hae' been in, an' no a mark o' beast or body in any o' them," said Reil, as he entered his cottage.

"No," replied his wife, "Haco says the dog took the road to Seymore Forest; he'll be back the morn, an' we'll tie a cord to his collar, an' one o' the boys can follow him wi' it."

While they were yet speaking, the dog entered less hurriedly than before; the poor animal had evidently been running hard, he was breathless, and lay down for a second or two, panting on the floor. While he lay, Haco examined his collar; turning it round he found the

words "Seymore Villa, Bayswater," engraved on the lower side, and almost hidden by the thick curls of the dog's neck.

They gave him water, and a few minutes sufficed to restore his wind. He gets up, shakes and stretches himself as if he had just awakened from a long sleep, and then, placing both his forepaws on Hugh's knee, looks up in the young man's face with a great howl.

"Poor Nep, poor Nep," said Hugh good naturedly, placing a hand on each side of the dog's head; the animal howled a second time, and jumping down, seized Hugh's coat in his mouth endeavoring to pull him from the cottage.

Hugh took his handkerchief from his pocket, and, fastening one end of it to the dog's collar, gave it a shake, as if to tell the animal to lead him where he would.

The dog understood him, and bounded from the cottage at a pace which made it hard for the two lads and their father, who followed him, to keep up with.

He took a line, almost as straight as the crows flies, past the cottage, up one of the cross streets, thence up the direct road to Seymore Forest, increasing his speed as he went, until at last, freeing himself from Hugh, he bounded on before them, and was lost to sight.

They were now at a loss what to do, they had gained the outskirts of the forest, passed all the straggling wind sown trees, and, just where the dog left them, there were so many paths, it would have been hard to say which they ought to take. Seymore Forest was but a narrow strip in comparison with the immense tract of forest land which covered the hills to their very topmost height, de-

scending on the other side ; but it was in the middle of, and ran so close to Lord Sydenhault's forests on either side, that the whole comprised one of the densest woods in England, stretching from the sea far up among the hills.

The men stood still, it would be simply folly to go on ; they talked among themselves ; it was now late in the afternoon, the sun sinking fast in the West, the twilight would not serve them in great stead to discover any one in a dark forest such as they were entering, and the moon would not rise for several hours after midnight.

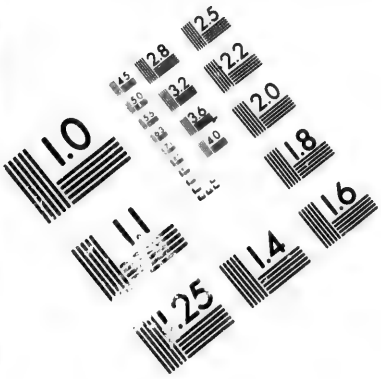
Irresolute, they were about to retrace their steps, when, with a sudden crash among the brush-wood through which he leaped, the dog was once more beside them, taking Hugh by the coat for the second time.

The handkerchief which still hangs to his collar is seized, and the dog, now seeming to understand why the men had not followed him, runs along at an easier pace. He has now ceased running in a straight line, and takes a path which leads diagonally across Seymore forest ; this persevered in for upwards of a quarter of a mile, the dog again ascends towards the heights which overlook the sea, the sun is waning low, and, but for the old man, the boys would have gone back.

" We're running a wild goose chase, father, following this fool of a dog, if we go on as far as he leads, we'll get home in time for breakfast to-morrow morning, after wandering about on the hills all night, and having the satisfaction of seeing the sun rise from a greater height than we never saw it rise from before."

" Never fear, Hugh, we'll win the end of our journey,





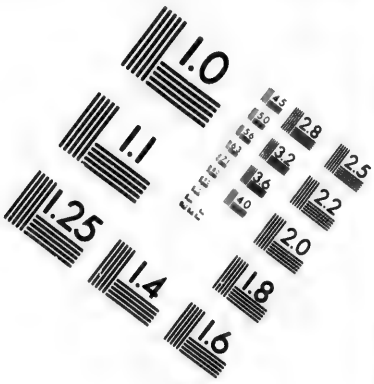
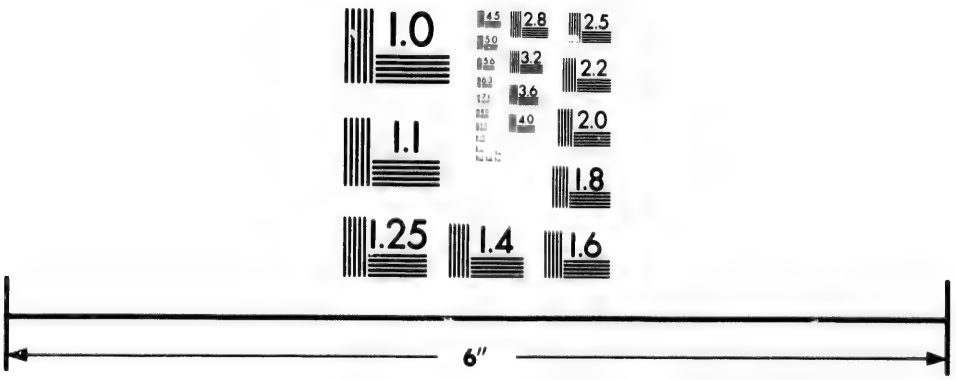
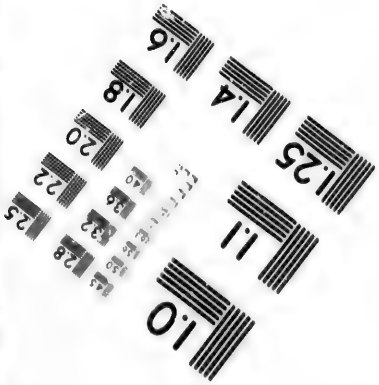
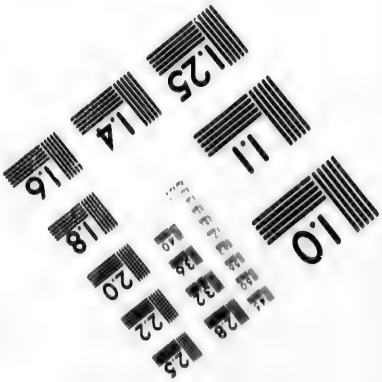


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an' get work to do the poor dumb brute canna' do, an' be back home afore the sun rise."

"We would need; 'The Silver Spray' is no half loaded yet, an' I advertised to sail on Wednesday; an' wandering on the hills all night doesn't make a man feel much like work t'next day."

While Hugh speaks, the dog turns into a narrow path leading up among the densest part of the pine covered rocks.

"He's taking us to the Hermit's Cave," cries Haco, "this is the very way in a straight line, with Seymore Church steeple on one side, and St. Wolfgang's Rock on the other."

"Some poor thing has crept into t'cave an' canna' get out," said the father, casting in his mind who the 'poor thing' might be.

They have not far to go now, the steps in the rock are reached, which seem like a winding, irregular staircase made by man. The dog once more leaves them, scrambling up the rocks; they follow, Haco in advance of the others; he reaches the moss grown stone in front of the cave, and leaning over the top, peers into the hollow recess. The father and Hugh are yet many yards from the top of the steps. The dog has leaped in, the bright beams of the sun are illuminating the mountain top, flooding with its glory each stately pine, each fallen mossy trunk, grey rock, and waving fern. The fox-glove around the stone on which the boy is leaning, seems great masses of purple bloom. He tries to look into the cave, which by the contrast appears quite dark. By degrees the boy's eyes get accustomed to the grey light, the walls

of the cave, the withered leaves with which it is so thickly strewn come into sight; even the dog can be seen now.—The boy's eyeballs stare,— his heart beats quickly, his cheek pales, he calls aloud,

"Father, father, there's a dead woman lying in t' cave!"

The old man is up on the stone, the first to enter; coming from the bright sunshine the darkness seems intense. He shuts his eyes once, twice, ere he becomes accustomed to the dim light, or can distinguish one object from another. Now he sees clearly, Miss Seymore is lying upon a bed of dry leaves, close by his feet, almost as pale as the night she was taken into his boat from St. Wolfgang's Rock? Her hands are crossed on her bosom, the dog is licking them.

The fisherman kneels down by the figure of the fainting girl, the young men are also in the cave. He takes her hand in his, the pulse still beats;

"Oh if we had only some water!" escapes his lips, he is thinking aloud.

"I'll soon get that," replies Haco, and in a few minutes he has gone, and returns with a pocket flask full of pure water from the Hermit's well, a never failing spring of clear water which trickles down the mountain a few paces from the cave.

The old man tenderly bathes her face and hands, trying to force some of the water between her lips, she heaves a sigh, her eyelids open for one moment, and then close heavily again.

"You must go home, Hugh, and get your mother to

put a mattrass or some blankets into t' covered cart; we'll take her home in it."

The word "home" strikes on her heavy ear.

"Oh no!" she pleads, exerting all her strength, "leave me here."

The fisherman understands well why she dreads so much to be removed from the cave, and says soothingly,

"We're going to take you to 'Thaniel Reil's house; I'm 'Thaniel Reil, an' them boys is my sons, an' when ye're well, and rested, ye'll can tell yersel' where ye want to go."

Warning Hugh how the case stands, lest he should relate to another the extraordinary scene they have just witnessed, the fisherman hurries his son off in search of the cart.

The boy Haco has some sweetmeats in his pocket, of which his father puts, from time to time, one into Ruby's mouth, endeavouring by every means in his power to recall her to consciousness; but the girl is too weak, she has been living for a week on wild fruits and nuts, drinking water from her hand at the spring, and during the past two days, she has neither eaten fruit, drunk water, nor stirred from the dry sods and withered leaves on which she lay. Had she been left but a few hours longer, she, the heiress of all the land around, would have died alone and uncared for, save by the poor dog who brought the fisherman to her aid, and was watching, with almost human earnestness, every breath she drew.

Hugh has a long way to go, and the night is pitch dark ere he returns with a lantern, to tell that the cart

is out on the stone-hinge road, the highest point to which they can bring it.

Ruby is wrapped in a large boat-cloak, which the father keeps for taking with him to sea on cold frosty nights, when he sits at the helm ; and the two boys carry her gently down to the cart, the fisherman himself preceding them with the lantern.

There were more than 'Thaniel Reil and his sons who saw that light flitting in and out among the dark pines that surrounded the mountain top where the Hermit had once dwelt. The sea faring people, when they heard that a light had been seen there, shook their heads and said, "There will be women mourning for men lost at sea ere the new moon is old ; it's to warn us, that the holy man's spirit comes back to the cave he dwelt in so long."

Ruby was weak and ill for many days, lying in the clean bright room which was the best in 'Thaniel Reil's house, but the fisherman and his wife feared not for her, she was exhausted with cold and hunger, worn out with watching and fear, and they knew that with care and the feeling of security she had in their humble home, she would soon regain her strength.

They knew well the risk they ran if it should be discovered they were concealing the Baron's daughter, but there was no hired hand about their dwelling, it was some distance from the other houses on the sands, and they said to each other ; "If the worst comes to the worst, neither Lord Seymore nor Mr. Penryth can take the house or the boat from us, they are both our own,

there'll be fish in the sea whether they're pleased or angry, an' if they donna buy, another will."

It was perhaps the knowledge that in neither house would they have bought from him if they knew what he had done, that made 'Thaniel Reil for years after, never drive his fish-cart to Sydenhault Hall, nor Seymore Castle.

CHAPTER XVI.

BARON SEYMORE IN THE PAINTER'S STUDIO.

"YOU know these places?" said Lord Seymore to the driver of the carriage he had hired on reaching Paris, some three days after his interview with Mrs. Sydney, shewing the man the card containing the address of both her son's atelier and boarding-house.

"I do, sir," replied the man, "the first every one in Paris knows; it is the atelier of Sydney, the painter of the Spring Tide pictures; the other is that of a *maison de pension* chiefly frequented by artists."

"Drive me to the boarding-house first," said the Baron perplexed lest Mrs. Sydney had given him a wrong address. He certainly was not in search of the famous painter of "The Spring Tide" pictures, of whom all Europe was speaking, whose fame, like Jonah's gourd, had grown, if not exactly in a night, at least in a year. A year ago no one had heard of such a man,— now,— people stared if you had not at least seen the engravings from those famous pictures of "The Spring Tide."

"There is some misunderstanding on my part no doubt," thought Lord Seymore, "or perhaps the lady may have forgotten to say, what is very likely the case, that her son is either a relative or a protege of this mushroom great man; we shall soon see."

The house was one where artists had either a room, or

a suite of apartments, as their means permitted, the porter taking charge of the whole.

Lord Seymore shewed the address to the porter, who seemed a most important personage in his own eyes.

"This person resides here?" said Lord Seymore inquiringly.

"Certainly, that is the number of the apartments occupied by Mr. Sydney, the great artist."

A happy thought struck Ruby's father, this painter was most probably married, his wife would be more likely to tell what she knew of a poor relative or protege's affairs, than a man puffed up with recently acquired fame; who had awakened one morning surprised to find himself celebrated.

"I wish to see Mrs. Sydney, shew me to her apartments."

"Impossible; there is no such person; Mr. Sydney is a bachelor, quite a young man, lives alone, sees no company even."

"Then I will see him."

"Mr. Sydney only comes here late in the evening, you can see him after seven at night, or before he goes to his atelier, at seven in the morning."

The Baron was driven to the atelier, he felt he was in the presence of the artist; not the boy school-master, certainly, but the artist, there were two or three young men in the room who were unmistakeably pupils.

"Mr. Sydney, I presume, the painter of the 'Spring Tide';" said Lord Seymore with some politeness; he saw

he was in the presence of a gentleman, and he wished to get the ear of the master, so that he might compass his purpose, find out his daughter's whereabouts, and punish the young man who had the audacity to raise his eyes to the eminence on which the daughter of Lord Seymore stood.

Mr. Sydney bowed, asking his visitor to be seated,

"I wish to see you alone," said Lord Seymore, who in the nervous state in which he then was, entirely forgot that he had not given the painter his card, "I have to ask your help in a matter of delicacy, I do not care to speak of, in the presence of others."

"These young men are French, and speak only their own tongue, nevertheless, if it is on a subject of importance you wish to speak, we can soon become private."

Mr. Sydney led the way through the opening in the curtain which divided his atelier, and thence into a small apartment fitted up as a library with a few choice pictures, evidently the work of another hand from his own.

On entering, Lord Seymore was struck with one of the latter, inquiring of the artist if it were his own work.

"It is not, it is the work of one who had he lived, gave promise of being a better artist than I may hope to become; I have been fortunate enough to strike the public taste; while my father toiled on in a higher walk unappreciated."

"I have seen a picture exactly like this somewhere, perhaps a copy."

"It is possible," was the laconic reply, as the artist again requested Lord Seymore to be seated, this was

scarcely needed to recall the Baron to the object of his visit, which pressed on him with a heart pang.

"Mr. Sydney," he began, "I have had the misfortune to lose my only child, a daughter; she left her home unattended on the morning of Saturday last."

Mr. Sydney asked himself if the gentleman were sane, or how he could possibly expect aid from him under the circumstances. Lord Seymore continued,

"I have reason to believe that one of your pupils, one bearing your own name, is aware of where my daughter is at this moment, and I wish you to aid me in getting at the truth."

"I think you must be under a great mistake; I have already observed to you that these young men are French, and speak only their own language. Was the young lady at school here?"

"No, but the person of whom I speak was her teacher in England some years ago; his surname is the same as your own; his mother, who lives at Sydenhault Oaks, in the vicinity of my place, gave me his address at your studio." He stopped for a second, suddenly recollecting he had not sent up his card, and then resumed, "My name is Godfrey Seymore, I am Lord Seymore of Seymore Castle."

"And I," said the artist, his face deadly pale as he spoke, "am Herbert Sydney, the French teacher of Miss Seymore in years past, the painter of to-day. It is useless to say I know nothing of Miss Seymore; would to Heaven I did; I would give all the fame for which

I have worked so hard to be able to tell where she is."

Herbert Sydney paced up and down the apartment his face of a livid ashen hue; Lord Seymore had the best assurance in the world that he had been told only the truth; he saw that the distress evinced in the face before him was equal to his own.

The porter tapped at the door, and then entering, delivered several letters to the artist. Singling out one, Mr. Sydney said,

"With your leave my Lord I will read this, it is from my mother, something tells me it contains intelligence of Miss Seymore.

He was right; the letter gave a detailed account of Lord Seymore's interview with Mrs. Sydney, ending by describing the young lady, in grey she had seen on board the boat, and who, she was sure, must have been Miss Seymore on her way to Seymore Castle.

Mr. Sydney read aloud; ere he concluded, Lord Seymore rose from his seat, exclaiming in accents of joy,

"Yes, that is my daughter's dress; of course, Mrs. Sydney has seen my daughter before?"

"Certainly.—There is no doubt Miss Seymore is safe at home in Seymore Castle."

"Yes, if I had had patience to go for one moment into my own house in passing, I should have seen her there, but I was on my way to Paris before Captain Wolferstan returned home, and they had no address to which they could send a telegram. Good-bye, Mr. Sydney, I must apologize for my intrusion, and the trouble I have given."

"There is no apology necessary. Good morning, my Lord."

Thus parted these two men, to meet again, in peril such as occurs to Britons but once in centuries, and then only to one in a million, she, whom each loved better than life, the cause of dread to both, more bitter than death.

SEYMORE CASTLE.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE. SEYMORE CASTLE.

RUBY, with Mrs. Reil's carefully nursing, was getting well and strong again, and many an anxious thought was cast by both herself and the Reil's into the future, as to what she was to do, where to go. Their cottage had proved a merciful place of shelter in her distress, but it could not be a home.

"I owe my life to your care, Mrs. Reil, it is your good nursing that has made me well again; I wish I knew how to nurse the sick, I would go and devote my life to that, how is it that you know so much?"

"I learnt all I know of the virtue of herbs in my visits to Jersey, my mother's native place, there is an Institution there kept by a few ladies who devote themselves to the care of orphans and sick people, they do a great deal of good, they care for and educate about fifty children who would be poor waifs but for them."

"Mrs. Reil, do you think these ladies would allow me to help them in their labors?"

"I am sure they would be very glad to have you with them, particularly if you took Monica with you, such a woman as Monica would be of great service to them, and with your accomplishments you could help to teach the children; some of them are taught music and drawing and such things as make them able to be governesses.

There is a young lady now, at Dr. Newcome's house, who came from their Institution; all the children are not educated alike, only those who show a talent for learning, some of them are taught to be dress-makers, others to be servants, all are instructed in some way how to gain an honest living."

"Oh!" exclaimed Ruby, "I should like of all things to go, and I know Monica would come with me anywhere, but how could I get there? how could I send for Monica?"

"It is not a hard matter to go to Jersey, there is a steamer from Southampton that goes there every day, and my husband's cutter is going there in a few days; if you would go in her we would make the cabin as comfortable as possible, and the cutter could lie out in the Thames for a few hours to take Monica on board."

"I should much prefer going in the cutter, it would be very comfortable I am sure, much better than the Hermit's Cave where I lived a whole week, and there would be no chance of my being found out there, which there might if I were on board one of the steam vessels. But," continued Ruby, as if she had just thought of the contingency, "is the place you speak of on the coast, is it one of the places the English go to?"

"No, it is inland, up in the interior of the island, it is quite a rare sight to see a stranger there. There would be no fear of your being found out there until all this ill thought of marriage wears out of my Lord's head; and you write for him to come and bring you home."

"And how could we get Monica on board the cutter?"

"My man will go to Bayswater and tell her you are

on board, and I'll warrant she'll need no bidding to come where you are. 'Thaniel has been often up at the Villa seeing Mistress Monica, her and me has always been good friends, and since 'Thaniel brought you home in his boat from St. Wolfgang's Rock, we grew more near than ever, and so, when the cutter went to London, 'Thaniel always took a step out to Bayswater to see what Monica was doing, no one will wonder to see him going there?"

It was all settled, the first trip the cutter made to Jersey, Ruby was to go in her.

The evening previous to her departure, Ruby wrote a long letter to her father; she told him how many letters she had written before she left home and destroyed them all, none of them expressed what she desired to say: she begged his forgiveness for all she had ever done against his wishes, and told him she longed for the time when Mr. Penryth's marriage with another, would make it unnecessary for her to remain away from home.

The letter is addressed and sealed; Ruby carries it into the front room, where the family sit, that she may give it to one of the boys to put into the post office; the door is open, she stands in the door-way and looks out into the dark night. She is thinking of that other dark night on which she arrived at Sydenhault Oaks, nearly a month ago, how long it seems since then. Ruby feels as if she had grown old since that night, she is thinking of her father, her kindred, her happy childhood's home up on the rock above; an irresistible impulse urges her to go there. She enters the cottage, and says to Mrs. Reil:

"It is so dark no one will know me. I will put my letter into the post office myself; I want exercise and fresh air."

"That you do, my child," replies the woman in a motherly way, it will do you good to go out, one of the boys shall go with you."

"Thank you, no, I am not afraid."

Ruby wished to be alone, to look upon the old grey walls, to touch them, to look through the windows, into the rooms where the pictures had been her earliest playmates, where the very chairs and tables spoke of home.

A short walk brings her to the upper town, accompanied by Nep, who now, could never be persuaded to leave her, the letter is put into the post office with a hesitating hand. Ruby knows her father has been at Seymore within the last few days, she thinks he may be there still, if so, and she sees him as she stands by the window, and his face looks sad as if he missed her; she will risk all, will go in and throw her arms round his dear neck, and ask for the forgiveness she now feels would be so surely hers, together with all the love and affection which she had known in the old time, before she left Seymore Castle, and the happy life there.

A few minutes and she is within the Castle gate, walking swifty up the drive with a lighter step than she has known for months; the sound of music strikes on her ear; the well-known notes of her own piano. She almost runs to the East wing that she may ascend to the balcony, from thence she can see all they do, hear almost every word they say in the large drawing-room.

She is on the balcony, the night is so dark another

would have stumbled at every step. Ruby could go round every tree on the lawn, through every room in the castle blindfold. She is close by the centre window, the blaze of light inside makes her shut her eyes for a moment; while she stands thus, the notes of the piano are again struck by a master hand, she knows the touch well, now Ethel's voice is pouring forth its sweetest tones in a favourite Italian duet they have often sung together. Ruby is gazing into the lighted room, there are visitors in the house, Ethel is standing by the piano, dressed in white, cloud-like muslin, with scarlet roses in her dark hair. The Percys of Durlingcourt Manor, relatives of her mother are there, neither Mr. Percy nor Colonel Wolferstan are in the room, but there are sounds of talking and occasional laughter, below in the dining room, which the gentlemen have not yet left, they, with her father, she is sure, are there. Ruby stands, as if transfixed to the spot, that room so familiar, full of light and warmth; its pictured walls, the vases filled with flowers, the richly coloured carpet, Ethel's dress and radiant face, the whole scene redolent of comfort and happiness. The contrast between herself and Ethel strikes on her heart with a sudden chill. There is a drizzling rain falling, Ruby's dress is light and thin, she draws her mantle tightly over her breast, which is heaving, as if a great sigh would escape and cannot. There is no roof to the balcony, the night is cold, Ruby leans against a pillar for support, she feels the chilling influence of the stone, and thinks it is not so cold as the weight which is lying on her heart.

Ethel's face is turned towards the balcony, it is bright

with smiles; Ruby realizes but too clearly that there is not one there who thinks of her in her far off home, wherever they fancy it may be. She creeps slowly down the steps, she is close beside the windows of the dining room, the shutters are closed, she can see nothing. But an indistinct murmur of voices in conversation meets her ear, a sudden burst of mirthful talking, she clings to the window sill; is that her father's voice she hears? She fancies it is, and that he speaks in his happiest, most cheerful tones!

Ruby presses her hand to her throbbing temples, her head is reeling, and she sits down on the wet grass, and leans against the stone wall, which in her desolation she deems more a friend than those within; those whom she so loved, and to whom she thinks, she is nothing now; — forgotten by all.

Nep lays himself down by her side; and puts his head into her lap, he seems to know she is in trouble, and rubs his nose fondly against her as if to show his love and sympathy. Ruby puts her arm round his shaggy neck, and, bending down, lays her soft cheek on the dog's head, her tears falling down like rain. "Nep, poor Nep," she sobs out, "you are the one who loves me best, perhaps the only one who will always love me."

Could Ruby have looked into that room as she had looked into the one above, she would have seen that the group around the dining table consisted of three gentlemen, neither of whom was her father; and could she have had the power of vision given her to see where he was, she would have looked into a room in the Tower of London, where Lord Seymore sat alone beside the dying

embers of a forgotten fire, his face sadder than she had ever seen it, his hair grayer. The book before him lying open, the page unturned for the past hour; his eyes fixed on vacancy; and, did her power extend to spirit reading, she would have seen the question engraven on his heart which he asked himself every waking hour, and which, in his dreams, was repeated in slow and measured tones,

"Where is my child?"

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE HEBREW BARON.

LORD SYDENHAULT was not the only one who recognized the boy; seen for a few minutes on the wharf at Sydenhault Oaks, in the dark man who stood half-hidden by the pillar at St. George's on the day appointed for the marriage of Mr. Penryth and Lord Seymore's daughter.

As the Honorable Edward Penryth moved uneasily up and down the nave, his eye was attracted by a man who stood half concealed by a column on the side of the altar opposite to the place where the bride would stand on her arrival. At first he looked upon the stranger as some one come to witness the ceremony, and only felt his presence an annoyance, because the bride and her party were so long in coming, that he began to fear they would not come at all.

The bridegroom seemed fascinated by the stranger, and as from time to time his eye would seek the place where he stood so still and statue-like, he observed a fierce look in the dark gaze which met his own, and that expression told him, that the bearded stranger and the boy he had seen years before on the quay at Sydenhault Oaks, whom he hated the first moment he looked upon him, were one and the same person.

Had this discovery been made a few minutes previous,



NATURAL BRIDGE AT LEBANON.

Mr. Penryth would have ordered the Beadle to turn the stranger out. Whether this could have been effected, it would be difficult to say, but it was too late, the bride was in the Church,— the priest at the altar.

When Ruby turned her wild eyes, and uplifted hands in the direction of the stranger, neither the action nor the look by which it was met, escaped the bridegroom; and when this man, whom he would fain have felled to the earth — imprisoned — sent to a penal settlement, nothing too hard or cruel, so that he might vent his rage, and satisfy his revenge — when this man stood on the steps of the Church, with fierce eyes, defying Edward Penryth, the latter vowed a secret oath he would have his revenge. From that day he set himself to find out where this stranger lived, and how he gained his bread; this was no easy task, seeing he knew nothing of him, except that he had come to him to ask the use of the Sydenhault carriage to take Miss Seymore home on the night she and her cousin were nearly drowned on St. Wolfgang's Rock. But Edward Penryth was a patient man, when he had a purpose to serve; and by going down to Sydenhault Oaks and pursuing his enquiries there, he discovered that the man whom he had sworn "to do unto death," was the son of a widow — a nobody, who had gained his livelihood by teaching; that his name was Herbert Sydney, and that Miss Seymore had been one of his pupils for upwards of two years. This last fact was a significant one to Edward Penryth, it spoke in terms which he hid for the present in his own bosom, resolved, when the day came, the day he would compass Heaven and earth to bring about,

when Miss Seymore should at length be his wife, he would then, not only be revenged upon the insolent upstart who had crossed his path, but would bring her to task, for her share in this outrage; to task in such a way, as would cause her to tremble when she heard the name of Herbert Sydney. The place of residence where this plebeian, this insolent upstart, now lived, was easily found. His mother, whose residence in Sydenhault Oaks made her easily accessible to a man in Mr. Penryth's position, at once gave him Mr. Sydney's address in Paris, well pleased, thinking her son had obtained a new patron.

To Paris then Mr. Penryth went, only to find that this nobody, was the painter of "The Spring Tide" Pictures! A man with whose name half of Europe rang. This was bad news, Sydney the painter would not be so easily crushed as Herbert Sydney the tutor; but there were ways and means of accomplishing even this; patience and perseverance would both be required; Edward Penryth had good store of each, and grudged neither time nor money to accomplish his object.

He had determined to tire his mother out by his absence. To make the blind woman, from the very weariness of her lonely life, accede to his unrighteous demands. The destruction of this man would give interest to his life of self imposed absenteeism, yet he could not hide from himself that it would be an arduous task, one which must be proceeded with in a wary manner, one to which he must devote time.

Mr. Penryth knew nothing of Ruby's absence from her home. Lord Seymore was too politic to permit such

a scandal as that of his daughter, a beautiful girl of twenty-one years, having left his house unattended, and without his knowledge, to come to the ears of any one, except those whose interest it was, to conceal such a *bruit* from the world.

With the exception of Monica, the very servants, even the housekeeper, knew nothing whatever of Miss Seymore's flight. Jasper, — Monica's confidant on all other occasions — only knew that Miss Seymore was from home, that she had been hurried off without time being given her to say goodbye to him, a thing she had never neglected even in her childish journeys of a day; and he somehow fancied she had been carried off to a convent, that, by a residence there, she might be coerced into marrying a man she hated. (Jasper's ideas of a convent being that of a place where the sunshine was shut out, and where to smile was a sin.)

Edward Penryth thought he could make good use of his influence with Ruby's father in running the painter to ground. From his position in the Tower, Lord Seymore was constantly coming in contact with people in power, introductions from such might be got to gentlemen of influence in France, those, who, unwittingly, could be made to aid his purpose. Lord Seymore and his daughter's disappointed suitor were alike ignorant, of each others acquaintance with Herbert Sydney. Whatever ideas the former had gathered from Mrs. Wolferstan's information, or his own suspicious, were carefully hid in his bosom; and it was part of Mr. Penryth's policy to feign entire ignorance of the man, either as teacher or artist. Sydney might disappear

some day, and never be seen or heard of again, or worse still, his body might turn up shewing marks of violence, or something which would lead to unpleasant investigation; it was best, for a man in Edward Penryth's position in society, not to know anything whatever of such an one.

Were it otherwise, he would never for a moment have entertained the idea of seeking help from Lord Seymore. Low as his own nature was, he understood perfectly the lofty character of Ruby's Father, the indignation and contempt which any attempt to injure another would meet with from him, hence the subject was not at all likely ever to be mooted between them.

In order to obtain the introductions he sought as necessary to his first plan of ruin for Herbert Sydney, (which was to raise a reaction in the public mind against his style of painting, to starve him out in fact,) it was necessary for him to return to London to see Lord Seymore, as through him more than through any other, could be obtained the introductions he sought.

"You did not expect to see me so soon again?" were the words with which he greeted his friend as he entered the library at the Tower.

"I did not indeed, but that only makes you the more welcome," was the reply, as he pressed the hand extended to meet his own. "I hope the Countess and your brother are well, and that it is to nothing unpleasant in your family, I am indebted for this visit?"

"On the contrary, I believe my mother is unusually well at present; I have not been at the villa, I shall only remain two or three days in town at most, leave-taking

never conduces to our happiness, at any age, and at my mother's time of life, is particularly painful. I do not mean to go to the villa; I shall dine at the club during the few days I am in London. I have taken it into my head" continued he, "to write something in connection with the Fine Arts; and in order to obtain an entrée into the galleries and collections of the French noblesse, (I mean to commence my work in Paris) I must provide myself with introductions; it strikes me your friend Baron Ephraim would, of all others, be the person to furnish such as would at once enable me to accomplish my object."

"If so," replied Lord Seymore, "I think I can promise his aid. I am sure he will give you an introduction to Baron de Schwartzkind, whose letter to his French brother will accomplish all you desire. The Jews are among our greatest patrons of art, and know more of its history than perhaps any other people in Europe. I have reason to know that Baron Ephriam is disengaged to-day, come and dine with me this evening; you will meet him, and have an opportunity of telling him exactly what you want, and, before you arrive, I shall have arranged with him for your introduction to the banker."

"A thousand thanks; I look to this work as a sort of resource in my trouble; it must absorb a great part of my attention, and wean my thoughts from unavailing regret. Good-bye, I shall be with you in the evening."

Edward Penryth left Lord Seymore's residence, wondering at the sad troubled face of his friend, his hair appeared grayer, himself many years older than when

they last parted ; he attributed this change to the disappointment caused by Ruby's disobedience,and he hailed it as a sign that his interest with her would not be forgotten in his absence ; he congratulated himself on Lord Seymore's pertinacity. "This fellow's audacity punished," thought he, "his name blotted out of the world, his very existence forgotten, his letters (which I dare say arrive with due regularity at present, each bearing its quota of pleasant information as to the height of the pinnacle the writer has gained) ceasing all of a sudden, the beautiful Miss Seymore, her romantic love for the artist having died a natural death, will find her best defence against old-maidism, in consenting to become my wife. And then"— his face assuming a sardonic smile, as he thought of the many plans he had already contrived by which he was to have revenge to satiety, "Madame will discover she has found her master!"

Edward Penryth and Baron Ephriam met at Lord Seymore's dinner-table, the Hebrew entering most warmly into Mr. Penryth's project of publishing a work, which the former declared would be one of intense interest. The would-be author became rather uneasy when pressed by the Baron to give him some idea of the plan of his work. Now the work was purely in imagination and had only been thought of as a stepping stone to the acquaintance of those who, unknown to themselves, were to aid him in his evil doings. Moreover, the man was by no means of a literary turn; he had never in fact written a composition longer than a letter, since he left the University, and his highly praised essays there, had been entirely the work of a boy, younger, but of more

talent than himself. Baron Ephriam's request, therefore, was a most unpleasant one.

The Hebrew saw the confusion his questions were producing, and recollecting the *mauvaise honte* which many clever men, authors of no mean repute, possess in a painful degree, he at once came to the rescue himself.

"Ah! I see, we cannot get you to speak; we must wait until we can read what you have to tell; after all I daresay it is the best way, the more we think, and, probably, the less we speak, the better we write. I have a few engravings here," continued the Hebrew, laying hold of a large sized port-folio as he spoke, "some of which, no doubt, you know; one or two of them only reached London from Paris this morning. They are from Sydney's pictures of 'The Spring Tide,' which are creating such a furore throughout the art circles of Europe; you have of course seen the originals?"

"I have not, nor do I wish to see them. From the description I have had of those already in the market, if we may speak in such common parlance of pictures, they are only exaggerated scenes of rock and water."

"You shall judge for yourself. The extraordinary truthfulness of the pictures is the charm by which they have taken the world by surprise. It is clear that memory, not invention, has suggested the subject of these scenes. The artist has evidently been an eye witness of each phase of danger he depicts on that sea-girt rock. Whether it is the fancied security of the girls, while looking at the outward bound fishing boats, through the fissure in the rock; or their agony as they pray to God for help; the sea, each moment, climbing up nearer and

nearer; or the girl enveloped in the whirling foam of the waves as they shape themselves into the form of a water spout above her head; every part bears evidence, not only to the artist's power of delineation, but to his having witnessed, what he paints with a life-like truth the best model could never inspire. The greatest wonder to me, is the power of memory possessed by the man, who, witnessing such scenes in a time of extreme excitement, can retain each picture in its individuality; and that, so distinctly, that the face which runs through the whole, expresses pleased wonder, terror, reverential awe, while raising hands and soul to God in prayer and faith, amid the clouds of spray, as she clings to the top of the rock."

While Baron Ephriam spoke, he opened the port-folio, and laying down the engravings one after the other in the order of their course, exhibited to Lord Seymore's astonished gaze, his daughter, as she must have appeared while on St. Wolfgang's Rock — now in girlish delight at the out-going sails,— again in prayer,— in agony of soul, such as Ethel had described so often; while she herself was in the boat, Ruby alone, amid the waves on the Rock!

"That fair face is the most perfect I ever saw, no Greek statue ever equalled it, its very perfection tells you it is no fancy, the hand of nature alone moulded those features, gave colour to the violet eyes, and texture to the soft white brow and cheek; you see a face of exquisite beauty here, but it is only on the canvass, with its depth of colour, its truth and clearness, that you realize what the original must be."

The Hebrew looked up to see what effect his pictures had produced on the two gentlemen who stood by his side, while he described with such enthusiasm the ability of the painter. It was with no common feelings he looked on each face, the hand of Ruby's father rested on the table, and trembled so as to shake the engraving on the edge of which it lay. It was withdrawn hurriedly, Losd Seymore would hide the feeling which caused the tremor, but the white face, full of woe, could not be hidden.

"The one whose face is pictured there, is my daughter," said Lord Seymore, his voice choked with emotion, while he asked himself the question, so often asked now, so familiar to his heart, "Where is she?"

"Your daughter," exclaimed Baron Ephriam in astonishment, as his eye sought the face of the man who had been her bridegroom, and would, as he had been told, yet be her husband, only the marriage for family reasons had been put off for a season. He saw there the face of a man old enough to be the girl's father, a handsome face it is true, and in good preservation; one which had never suffered from excess, that was evident, but with a light in it he did not like, and, as the handsome dark eyes rested on the engravings, the Hebrew noted their expression turn to bitter hatred! What could this mean?— Had his bride jilted him, and did he hate her now? And her father's face,— why did that tell so plainly a tale of sore heart trouble?— There was a double enigma here.

There is a cloud cast over the three men which makes each feel as if he would prefer the privacy of his own

apartment, those beautiful engravings have thrown a dark shadow around them.

Baron Ephriam has retired to his own apartments, he is pacing up and down his room, trying to read the riddle chance has placed before him within the last few hours; and, as he searches his mind over and over again for a solution, and thinks of the pictures, and then of the painter, the almost forgotten words of Herbert Sydney come back to his memory, solving the mystery, converting the darkness into a flood of light.

The words ring in his ears; "The face I see in my dreams, one I know and love, and hope to win," and with this comes the sight of the artist's countenance suddenly turning as pale as ashes, the hurried journey to London — and he connects both with his own words, which told the artist that Lord Seymore's daughter was the bride of another!

Baron Ephriam is still walking to and fro in his library; he is thinking of the promise he has made to aid Edward Penryth in his work.

He feels a dislike to the man,— he distrusts him; he asks himself what is the probable use these introductions he has agreed to procure, from, and to, his brethren, will be put to? He recollects the evident confusion his request for a slight synopsis of the proposed history of art created. The trepidation the man evinced; he could almost put his hand on his heart and say:

"Such a work will never see the light with Penryth's name appended to it; there will never be a line of it penned."

His thoughts form themselves into spoken words, ring-

ing clearly on his ear in the silence of his room, "It is not for this these introductions are wanted; I myself must watch and set others to watch also, the use they are put to. It haunts me somehow, that this sinister looking man, this Lord with his suave and courtly manners, would willingly see Sydney the painter under the sea-waves he portrays so well. It is not doing the work the Rabbi Abraham sent Nathan the Seeker to do, this mixing myself up in the loves and hates of these uncircumcised Gentiles; yet I cannot stand by with folded hands or silent tongue, and know there is evil abroad for the artist of the Tyrol. That boy has wound himself strongly around my heart. It would be strange were it not so! But for him there would, long ere now, have been another Seeker;— Nathan lying in an unhallowed grave among 'the nations.'"

* * * * * * *

Baron de Schwartzkind is in his library, he welcomes his kinsman with a friendly grasp of the hand.

"An introduction for Mr. Penryth to my brother; with great pleasure, but why do you not give it him yourself?

"I was requested to introduce him to you, and promised to do so; he would in that case have asked the introduction himself. I made the promise last night, since then I have seen cause to regret giving such a promise, I will hand him your introduction to your brother instead, a formal letter is all I wish for, I will wait while you have it written out, and sign it."

The letter is placed in Baron Ephriam's hands, Baron de Schwartzkind draws his chair close to his Hebrew

brother, lays his hand with familiar fondness on the arm beside him, as he says,

"My brother Nathan has been in Grenada, has seen the Rabbi Abraham since last we met? The old man's step is still firm, his eye bright?"

"The Rabbi Abraham looks and speaks as if he had not reckoned three score years, and talks with earnest joy of going up to Jerusalem; I trust the day is not far distant when we shall all go up to Jerusalem, to praise the Lord in Zion."

"And of the Holy Stone?"

Nathan shook his head,

"Nothing, unless a dream can be reckoned something. It came to me some weeks past, and I counted it as naught, until last night."

"Tell me what you saw, my brother; you are not the first Hebrew who has been warned of God in a dream."

"I was in a fisher's boat approaching a rock-bound coast, the moon shining overhead as clear as day, the waves coming up to the boat's side in light ripples. In a moment I was in a room within the fisherman's cottage; on a settle lay a girl asleep, I marked her face well, a face of perfect beauty, and in my dream, I remembered it as the same face Sydney has portrayed in his pictures of 'The Spring Tide;' round her neck was a gold chain of antique workmanship, attached to which was a gold case; through the case shone the sapphire in all the blue glory of the Holy Stone. Last night I found that the original of the beautiful face in the 'Spring Tide' pictures is the daughter of Lord Seymore!"

"Ha! that indeed is a dream which seems to have a

certain significance, although, previous to her father's death, it is not at all likely his daughter would be in possession of the Holy Stone."

"Your words are true, it seems impossible that Lord Seymore would part with it during his life time, yet of one thing I have assured myself beyond any doubt, it is *never* worn by him; I have searched his person for it times without number; when his sleep was so sound that a cannon fired in the room would have failed to awake him."

"I am aware of that; you told me so long ago, it is certainly strange, aye, marvellous, that he should not carry the Holy Stone about his person. Can it be possible he is ignorant of its virtues?"

"Impossible! while I spoke to him of the Stone, its virtues, its story, his face said more plainly than words could express, 'I know, I know!'"

"And you are sure he is aware of the Legend, '*It came with a woman, it must go with a woman?*'"

"He knows it as well as you or I, or the Rabbi Abraham. His family, whether Seberts or Seymores, have known it for ages, even as the Tribe to whom it was given, and who have mourned its loss all these centuries."

"That is conclusive; possessed of such knowledge, Lord Seymore with his character for wisdom and far-seeing would never place the Holy Stone in his daughter's hands while he himself lives; it would be throwing it into the lion's mouth, no, depend upon it, whether he wears the jewel or not, it is in his own keeping."

Both men were silent for a few minutes; both lost in thought, occupied with the same subject, one of intense

interest to every Hebrew, the recovering of the jewel, given by the Angel to Tobias; the thoughts of Baron Ephriam forming themselves thus, "That the Stone is not in Lord Seymore's possession, as far as his residence in London is concerned, I have satisfied myself; my many searchings, unimpeded as I have taken care they should be, have assured me of that. I will ask for an introduction to his daughter; the excuse I have for making such a request is a good one; all the world will naturally desire to see the original of the beautiful head which, to admirers of beauty, forms the great attraction of the pictures of 'The Spring Tide.' I have faith in my dream, I hope ere I die to see with waking eyes, the antique chain of my night vision."

"I shall go to Paris in a few weeks," said Baron Ephriam, speaking aloud; "you remember your promise of becoming a purchaser of one of Sydney's pictures?"

"I do, and I am more willing to fulfil my promise now than I was at the time it was made; these pictures are daily becoming more and more famous, and I now desire to possess one of them. I wish my purse enabled me to become the purchaser of the whole series."

Baron Ephriam raised his eyes, which twinkled with mirth, to his friend's face;

"Your purse, poor fellow, all the world knows that it is not a long one; that purse of yours must often stint you in your desires. How much do you mean to give for one of these pictures?"

"That is for you, or I should rather say, for Sydney to say; the buyer seldom fixes the price to be paid for the article bought."

"The price of one of 'The Spring Tide' pictures is ten thousand pounds," replied Baron Ephriam, assuming an air of nonchalance as he spoke; while in reality he watched with intense interest the effect of his words.

"Ten thousand pounds! Is the man in his senses?"

"Which man do you mean, the Hebrew or the Gentile?"

"I mean Sydney; a man we never heard of until a few months ago, he is surely crazy to value his work at a price never given except for a rare painting by an old master."

"No! do you remember the price paid to David for his Expulsion, and offered to Rosa Bonheur for a cattle piece? These are subjects which have been handled for centuries, Sydney's is a new conception."

"These prices also are exceptions, given for a special reason! David's picture was purchased for exhibition, and made upwards of a hundred thousand pounds for its owner, Rosa Bonheur's was ordered for the same purpose."

"And if Baron de Schwartzkind will exhibit Sydney's picture, he will realize twice the sum any other exhibitor has done, because thousands, who don't care for seeing pictures, will go to see Baron de Schwartzkind. But joking apart, it is three years since I asked you to buy a picture of the boy artist who saved my life in the Tyrol, then I told you that you must give a large price for a mediocre work; you have had the use of the money for three years, in that time I have no doubt you have doubled it, so that in reality the picture will cost you a mere trifle, and you will have a picture of which

all Europe rings the praises, and more, which every artist who has seen it, allows to be unique in conception, unrivalled in execution. Now I made the price, not Sydney. I am under a debt of obligation to this man which money cannot pay. No one knows better than you, Baron, that I cannot give up my time to the accumulation of wealth, my life being devoted to the accomplishment of an object all Israel longs for. But if Baron de Schwartzkind gives ten thousand pounds for Sydney's picture, Kings and Kaisers will follow his example."

Baron Ephriam rose as if to depart, laid his hand on his friend's shoulder, and looking earnestly into his eyes, said,

"This money, my brother, what is that betwixt thee and me?"

"Naught, my brother!" was the answer given in a tone of deep feeling. "Tell Sydney to send the picture, and to draw on me for the money."

CHAPTER XIX.

MISTRESS MONICA.

THE morning on which Ruby was to depart for Jersey, was dull and cold, with a drizzling rain which had been falling since the previous night.

Ruby sat on the deck, wrapped in a woollen shawl belonging to Mrs. Reil, and covered by an awning of sails, hastily improvised by the fisherman and his sons, when they found that all their arguments were ineffectual to persuade her to go below to the little cabin, out of the wind and the cold.

Her heart was sad and desolate as she sat amid the bitter wind and driving rain, which, shelter her as they might, it was impossible to ward off entirely. She watched one familiar spot after another disappear in the distance; until at last Seymore Castle, perched like an eyrie upon its rocky height, shewed but a dim outline, and then sank entirely from her sight. Seymore Forest upon the hills,— the mountain top which towered above the Hermit's Cave, with its memory of cold and loneliness, was the last feature of home on which her eyes rested, and even that, quickly gave place to a broad sea of stormy billows bounded by grey sky, the latter only distinguishable when the wind, which came in gusts, blew the light rain aside for a moment.

Ruby's tears fell fast as she now realized more fully

than ever, that she had truly left her home and kindred. In the fisherman's cottage, however, its surroundings might differ from those to which she was accustomed, she was among people she had known from her childhood, the peasantry of her own land, who attended to her every want with the most sedulous kindness. Even in the Hermit's Cave, she was in her own forest, on her native hills; where, every night, amid the darkness, she could distinguish the light from the windows of Seymore Castle, shining like a beacon of hope.

But now, all she could call home was gone from her sight, and she, herself, out amid the wide sea, alone, journeying to a strange land, to people of a strange tongue, and her own,—her own she might never see them more!

She remembered that Monica used to go once in three or four years to the mountains of Wales to see her relations remaining each time several weeks; it was more than three years since she had been there, it was most likely that now, when her services were not required, she had gone to see her kindred; in this case how hard for her to go alone to this strange place, among this strange people.

Nep walked up and down the deck enjoying the rain, which, with his love for the water, was a luxury to him; now and then he would come and put his nose on Ruby's lap and evince his affection for her in his own doggish way; poor Nep felt she was in trouble, and would have comforted her if he could.

'Thaniel Reil was pacing the deck, and in passing where Ruby sat, addressed some observation to her on

the weather, the sea or sky; not waiting for an answer which he saw her burdened heart would find it difficult to give in words; at last, seeing her a little more composed, and that she patted Nep's head, and spoke to him, the fisherman stayed his steps, saying in a cheerful tone, as if he knew he was imparting good news,

"We are going at a spanking rate, by this time to-morrow, if the wind holds good, you will have Mistress Monica to tell you news of all that has happened in your absence."

"I fear," said Ruby, "that Monica may not be there when you go to the Villa," telling him on what her surmise was founded.

The old man heard her with blank astonishment, and although he combated her arguments in the best way he could, it was but too evident that his real opinion coincided with hers. The fisherman knew the people to whom he was bringing her, and he feared not for her happiness and well-being among them, as far as their power went; but he knew how Miss Seymore had been watched and waited on from her childhood, and that, for a time at least, every one would be strange to her, everything around her seem poor and lonely; that it was no place for a nobleman's daughter even with Monica, and he asked himself, "If Mistress Monica is in Wales, how will it be then?"

There was no help for it, the old man had no choice between his own cottage and Madame Dupoint's Institution, there was no comparison between the two, and he comforted himself with the assurance that, even if Monica were not at the Villa now, she would, in all

probability, be there the next trip the cutter made, and then he would take her to the Island.

The cutter is moored in the river, and the fisherman and one of his sons go, in one of the boats, to seek Monica. The boy is left in charge of the boat, while the old man makes the best of his way to Bayswater, expecting nothing for his pains, but the words which he shaped in his mind until they rang in his ears; "Monica is from home, she has gone to see her folk."

As he enters the gate, 'Thaniel sees Jasper, busily employed pruning a standard rose tree, at no great distance; the men are great friends, they have been so since they were boys at school.

"Is that you, 'Thaniel?"

"Who's un the day, Jasper?"

The men shake each other by the hand heartily, and then Jasper asks after the fisherman's folk, the latter almost fearing to ask for Mistress Monica, lest he should hear the response which has been conned in his own mind so often as now to seem reality, and he cannot be false enough to ask for Miss Seymore; answering his first question,

"They're well, four o' t' lads are wi' me i' t' cutter. Your gentles are weel?"

"They're no at home, Miss Seymore's off some way, an' Monica's no wi' her; the rest are at Seymore Castle, did'nt ye see un?"

"The officer an' his leddy? no-a, I've no a been at the Castle this while, I'm sailing the cutter noo an' make better bread o' 't. Monica will be off seein her folk?" The old man knew it was a useless question.

"She's no that, she's i' the house, but down i' the mouth since Miss Seymore was taken off. I'm afeard my Lord's putten her in one o' them convents, he's doin that to make her marry Mr. Penryth."

The intelligence that Monica was in the house made the old fisherman's heart give a sudden bound, yet impatient as he was to see her, and "make assurance doubly sure," he could not let such a wrong as sending his daughter to a convent, which the fisherman and his class consider as little removed from a jail, be imputed to Lord Seymore.

"No, no; her father never did sitch a thing, she's visitin or some thing."

"I hope it may be zo, but I'm zore afraid, an' I'm sure o' one thing, although I was never telt it; she would rather marry the tutor lad that took her off from the top of St. Wolfgang's crag than ten Mr. Penryths."

"Whew!"— said old 'Thaniel, "is that the way t' wind blaws, think ye?"

"I dunno think about it; I'm zure enough."

Monica and the fisherman are alone in her little room; she sets before him some dainties which his own table knows not; she expresses her surprise that the old man does not taste the cider, fruit and cakes, and praises their goodness.

She has not spoken of Miss Seymore, of whom she is thinking day and night; she has been forbidden to tell the truth to any one, and her heart is too full of that bitter truth to speak of her as if all were well.

'Thaniel looks around the room, examining with careful eye both door and window.

"I have something to say to you 'at no one must hear but yoursel'; is any body about?"

Monica got up from her seat, tried if the door was fast shut, bolted it, let down the window, and then, standing in front of where the old man sat, asked hastily,

"What is it about, is it news of Miss Seymore?"

The fisherman nodded with a confidential look, and pointing with his thumb in the direction of the river, said in a low whisper,

"She's yonder."

Monica did not speak for a second, but her earnest eyes and compressed lips told the agitation of her mind; at last she seemed to apprehend.

"Is the cutter up?" she asked, as if it cost her an effort to speak.

Another nod, and a significant "aye" from the old man.

Monica put her hand on his arm,

"Wait for me, I'm going with you. She's in the cutter?"

"She's thot, an' she wants you doon; we're off to Jersey by the afternoon tide," was the answer given, like the first, in a low whisper.

Monica took a sheet of paper and wrote,

"*Honored Sir:—I am going to Miss Seymore; she has sent for me. I have taken two of her trunks with me, and drawn on the account at the Bank, where you put my own money, for a hundred pounds. Your obedient humble servant,*

Monica Mills.

This she enclosed in an evelope addressed to her master, and leaving the room, sent one of the servants for a cab, told the housekeeper that she was going to Miss Seymore who had sent for her, placed the trunks, which had been packed for the trip to the Continent, in the hands of the servants to be put into the cab, and in half an hour after she had heard these few whispered words, was on the way to the city. There she went to Hoaves' Bank, and drew a hundred pounds from an account kept in such a fashion that, in her master's absence, she could supply herself. She then posted her letter to Lord Seymore, and, in a couple of hours after the time the fisherman had spoken to Jasper, he was again on board the sloop, helping Monica to descend the companion ladder to the little cabin where Ruby sat.

CHAPTER XX.

THE MAD LORD'S MEDICINE.

LADY SYDENHAULT was taken by Sir James Clark to the first oculist in London, who, on inspecting her eyes, decided that the time was now come, the time so long looked for with alternate hope and fear, when the opaque *lenses* were ready to be removed from her eyes. In a few more days it would be ascertained whether she was again to be blessed with sight, or doomed to pass the rest of her life groping amid the darkness which had been her lot for the last twenty years.

The day appointed for the operation had arrived; every preparation made. Poor Lord Sydenhault, who seemed to be growing more dreamy, more inert and silly day by day, was to be taken out for a long drive, accompanied by Brown, so that he might not disturb his mother, who not only during the operation, but during that, and many subsequent days, must be kept perfectly still; the least emotion of mind or body being detrimental to the recovery of her sight.

The room prepared for the operation was one in connection with her ladyship's bedroom. The Countess was seated there, waiting for the physicians; Mrs. Morgan, the housekeeper in attendance; the nurse and other domestics in the adjoining apartment.

A servant opened the door of the room, and silently

beckoned to Mrs. Morgan. The housekeeper followed the signal, to find Brown bending over Lord Sydenhault who was lying on the floor of the hall, writhing in what seemed an epileptic fit, foam issuing from his mouth. Just at this moment the physicians entered, Sir James Clark inquired what was the matter.

He was at once informed; Brown, with great presence of mind, stating that, from the time the dose of medicine was increased, his master had evidently become worse in health.

"In that case," replied Sir James, who had the patient's hand in his, and to whom Brown addressed himself; "you had better resume the small dose, have him removed to his own room for to-day, and kept as quiet as possible; if the small dose restore him to his usual state, good, if not, let me know."

Lord Sydenhault was taken to his own apartments for the rest of the day, the small dose of medicine twice a day administered instead of the large dose three times, the result was, that in the course of a week he again amused himself as usual with the solitaire board, which, since he had taken the large dose he had entirely neglected.

The operation on the Conntess' eyes was performed, the bandages put on which were not to be touched for ten days; at the end of that time they would be removed, and the oculist able to determine whether light or darkness for the rest of her life was to be Lady Sydenhault's lot.

The tenth day arrived; Mrs. Morgan was again in waiting on her Mistress, the doctors were to come at

twelve o'clock, it was now ten, and Lady Sydenhault talked hopefully with her faithful housekeeper of the operation which was that day to be determined.

As on the day when the operation had been performed, a maid servant appeared at the room door with ashen face, beckoning to Mrs. Morgan.

The housekeeper, with quickly beating heart, followed the girl out to the lawn, fully expecting to see the imbecile again in a fit such as had before attacked him. "Perhaps," thought she, "I will this time have to look on while his soul passes away in those desperate struggles;" the poor woman blaming herself severely that she had not let her Mistress know of the first fit, so as to break the intelligence which she felt assured would soon have to be given her.

"What shall I do?" exclaimed the housekeeper; "my lady lying up there unable to move, this news enough to destroy her new-born sight; Mr. Penryth on the Continent; I am sure my lady does not know where to telegraph to him, when the day of trouble comes. It seems to me that the gentry, with all their state and riches, are more to be pitied than the poor; if Mr. Penryth had been a poor woman's son he would not have left his old blind mother and foolish brother at such a critical time, to go and amuse himself in a foreign land."

Out on the lawn a crowd of the servants was collected around some one lying on the ground at the corner of the conservatory. To Mrs. Morgan's great relief, before approaching close to the group, she saw Lord Sydenhault standing, looking down on the object which occu-

pied their attention, wearing the same sad, silly face he always wore when anything troubled him.

The servants made way for her as she approached, and there she beheld, extended on the grass, poor Brown, white as a corpse, and quite insensible; she knelt down and taking his hand, felt that a slight pulse was perceptible.

"How did this happen? send for the nearest doctor as quickly as possible," she exclaimed almost in one breath.

"The doctor has been sent for," said one; while another replied to her first question,

"He climbed the ladder there," pointing to one that lay on the grass a few paces off, "to get a bunch of grapes that had been left out after the other fruit was picked, and my Lord fancied it; the ladder swayed, and down he came, knocking his head on the leaden spout that projects from the conservatory. I saw him fall, he has never spoken or moved since."

While the man was yet speaking, the doctor arrived, an apothecary from a chemists shop in the neighbourhood, Mrs. Morton explained to him, in few words, the necessity there was for the house being kept tranquil. He at once advised that Brown should be sent to the nearest hospital, offering to go with the man himself. The carriage was ordered, and in a few minutes poor Brown, accompanied by one of his fellow servants and the apothecary, was on his way to the hospital.

"There must at once be some one appointed to take charge of my Lord," said Mrs. Morgan, speaking to the butler, "I think William's temper and quiet manners fit him more for an onerous situation of the kind than any

of the others; I shall take charge of administering my Lord's medicine myself until it is safe to inform her Ladyship of what has happened."

That day the bandages were removed from Lady Sydenhault's eyes. Before the physician could ask a question as to the effect of the light, she raised both her hands to shield her weak sight from the dim grey light around, which to her seemed a glare of bright sunshine.

The oculist gave an exclamation of joy, while the attendant physicians looked in each other's faces with delight at the triumph of their art, which had succeeded in restoring sight to a woman nearly seventy years of age, twenty of which had been passed in almost utter darkness.

"Let me congratulate your Ladyship," said the oculist, "your sight is restored, but is still so weak that I must replace the bandages for five days more; at the end of that time we will make another essay; it is probable, that even then, your unaccustomed eyes will not bear the light, but I hope, by that time, to make the bandages less opaque, and in the meantime, you may move about from one room to another, provided that all are kept in a state of semi darkness."

The physicians have gone, Lady Sydenhault is on her knees, with heart and soul raised to God in thanksgiving for His great mercy.

When the hour arrived at which Lord Sydenhault's medicine was to be given, Mrs. Morgan went to the cupboard where she knew it was kept, and seeing there the bottle of port wine and cinnamon she herself had prepared, naturally concluded it contained the medicine;

(the supply which Brown had received from Mr. Penryth being carefully locked up in the compartment he had caused to be made for its safe keeping, the key of which was in his own pocket in the hospital,) the port wine and cinnamon therefore, was administered to Lord Sydenhault without any suspicion of its not being his medicine, and this continued for many weeks, during which time, poor Brown lay in the hospital, ill of brain fever, unable to recollect even his own name.

The appointed fifth day arrived, and with it again came the oculist. When the bandages had been removed from Lady Sydenhaul's eyes for the second time, the light again struck with sharp pain on the sensitive organs, but, during the moment which intervened from the time the bandages were removed until she again placed her hands over her eyes for their protection, she saw, and recognized, a quaint old cabinet of carved oak!

"Oh!" said she, while talking to Mrs. Morgan afterwards of the emotions which the sight of that familiar piece of furniture awakened in her soul, "I can never express to any one the joy and thankfulness I felt as I looked on the quaint carving of Abraham about to sacrifice Isaac, one upon which, in my childhood, I used to gaze on, with fear and wonder. It is so strange that this should have been the first object I saw. Had I been permitted to choose what I should first look upon, my desire would certainly have been to see my poor Arthur's face, this I know must have been denied me; that panel with its quaint old carving would probably have been my second choice."

The oculist was now to come each day, that the band-

ages might be removed for a few seconds, so that he might be the better able to judge of the after treatment to be adopted.

Thirty days passed away, and in that time her Ladyship was declared to be fully restored to sight, and the bandages removed during an hour each day.

The day on which Lady Sydenhault was permitted first to see her poor son was the twenty-first from the day of Brown's accident, and in that time Lord Sydenhault had lost much of the silly look which had characterized his face for many years; he was still listless, dreamy, inert, but the childish, vacant expression had nearly disappeared; it is true at times the old imbecile manner would return, when he would amuse himself with a piece of string, or even by tearing leaves from the nearest book; but then, to be set against this, there were times in which he would read for an hour or two without intermission, as he had done once before at the time of his brother's wedding, when the accident happened to his medicine.

"Arthur, my poor Arthur!" said Lady Sydenhault, as she tried to raise her weak eyes to her son's face.

"Kneel down, my boy," said Sir James Clark, the old tried friend of the family, who had known Lord Sydenhault when he was a boy, "and let your mother see your face."

The poor imbecile knelt down as he was bid, and looked in his mother's face, not with the silly look which she expected to see, but with an expression that reminded her of the face she had parted with in its early manhood, twenty-five years before.

"Your hair is turning, my poor Arthur."

"Yes, mother; while yours is as brown as ever I remember it."

"Let me congratulate your Ladyship," said the oculist, "it is not one in a hundred at your age whose restored sight would be able to tell that; the few grey hairs that his Lordship has, might have escaped your notice, and your sight still be strong and good; have courage, my Lady, with care you will yet be able to pick up needles and pins."

Mrs. Morgan sent regularly to the hospital to enquire after Brown each day, but for six weeks nearly the same answer was returned, "a little better,— no better,— the same."

At last the day came, when a hurried message was sent from the hospital desiring Mrs. Morgan's presence, Brown urgently wishing to see her.

She went immediately, and on reaching his bedside, before she was able to ask after the health of the poor wasted looking man, he held up a key towards her, in his transparent, bony hand, uttering the words,

"The medicine, the medicine!" Mrs. Morgan at once understood what he meant;

"Compose yourself, Brown, my Lord is much better than you ever saw him; reads and writes every day, converses freely with company, remembers to-day what he saw yesterday, and is so much improved that every one in the house entertains hopes of yet seeing him reassume his birth-right."

She stopped, and the eyes of the sick man, which were gazing wildly in her face when she began to speak,

assumed a look of composure, while the hand and arm, by degrees, sought rest upon the bed.

"Mrs. Morgan, this is better news than ever I expected to hear. Where did you get medicine for my Lord?"

"I found a bottle full in your cupboard; it is nearly finished now."

"A bottle full in the cupboard!" said Brown, his eyes evincing the surprise he felt. "The medicine was all locked in a new compartment there, of which this is the key."

"Of course," replied Mrs. Morgan, "I knew nothing of that, and as I found a large square bottle on an upper shelf of your cupboard, exactly the same as the one from which the medicine was spilt at the time of Mr. Penryth's wedding; I concluded Lord Sydenhault's medicine was in it."

"That bottle," replied Brown, "contained the medicine you yourself made; the proper medicine is locked up in the compartment."

The sick man wearied with so much speaking, handed her the key, his eyes closing heavily as he did so.

"Have no anxiety about my Lord, Brown, he is better than you have ever seen him, both in mind and body; I will take the key to Lady Sydenhault, and be guided by her what is best to be done. She is now, thank God, no longer blind, neither is there any fear of exciting her by the information I have to give. I shall tell her of what I made the medicine. It is perhaps, a work of God's Providence, your being ill, for most likely, the medicine he was taking did him no good."

Mrs. Morgan took her way home, marvelling at what

she had heard. As she entered the house, she was met by Lord Sydenhault and the gardener, the former calling to her,

"Morgan! I wish you would give me the seeds I gave into your charge about a week ago, they are the seeds of a pomegranate which was brought from the Holy Land, and Higginson tells me it will be better to have them sown at present; from the long rest they will have during the winter in the moist earth, he says, they will come healthier and stronger plants in Spring, than they would if kept dry until then."

Mrs. Morgan recollected perfectly having received the seeds in question, but it seemed impossible for her to remember, just then, where she had placed the packet containing them; her mind was confused and preoccupied by the scene at the hospital, and by what she had heard there, and do what she would, she could not recall to mind anything concerning the seeds, except that she had received them in charge. Seeing her confusion, Lord Sydenhault said:

"You do not remember where you placed the parcel, Morgan?"

"No, my Lord, I am ashamed to say I do not."

"Then I do," replied he, smiling good humouredly, "get your keys and meet me in the passage leading to your room, I saw you put them into a cupboard there."

Mrs. Morgan did as she was requested, but even when thus far reminded of where she had placed the seeds, her memory was at fault. Upon her opening the cupboard, Lord Sydenhault took a small green basket from one of the shelves, and there found the packet, shewing it to

the housekeeper with the same good natured smile as before, reminding her so much of the boy they all loved so well, ere this terrible blight fell upon him,

He had gone half the length of the passage on his way out when he turned quickly round, saying:

"Morgan! I think I heard some one tell her Ladyship that you had gone to the hospital to see Brown; how is he?"

"He is much better, my Lord, and the people there seem to think he will be able to return in a few weeks."

"I am glad to hear that, he is a kind-hearted, good fellow, and used to bear so patiently with all my fancies."

Lord Sydenhault departed, leaving the housekeeper standing looking after him in astonishment. The fact of his remembering where the pomegranate seeds were placed, while she could not, was a significant one, and the allusion he made to his own peculiarly irritable state, was the first she had heard him make, during all the long years of his illness.

After taking off her bonnet and shawl, Mrs. Morgan at once sought Lady Sydenhault's apartments, sending the waiting-maid to inquire whether the Countess could be seen.

"Come in here, Morgan," said her mistress, who was seated in an ante-chamber, the door of which was constantly kept open so as to allow a softened light to enter from the inner room, less painful to her Ladyship's weak eyes than that which came directly from the window. "I am glad to hear that Brown sent for you. How is he."

"Your Ladyship will be pleased to know that he is

very much better, and quite sensible, he sent for me principally with regard to my Lord's medicine. I have a long story to tell your Ladyship of what I know myself, and of what he has just told me; shall I relate it now, or wait for another time?"

"Now, certainly, there is no subject so near my heart, or half so interesting to me, as anything relating to my son. I begin now to entertain the most sanguine hopes of his recovery. While you were gone, I had a visit from Sir James Clark, who previous to his entrance, walked round the lawn with Lord Sydenhault, talking with him, and asking him questions about the trees in the grounds, and the few late flowers which still adorn the beds on the lawn, in all cases receiving the most pertinent answers. Sir James assures me there can be nothing really wrong with his brain; and I have determined to allow him to bring a medical man, a friend of his own, here, who has made such cases his peculiar study. Oh Morgan!" continued her Ladyship, "how grateful I ought to be, not only my sight given me again; but what is a thousand times more precious, a reasonable prospect of having my poor boy restored to himself."

Her Ladyship entirely overlooked the circumstance that the boy of whom she spoke was more than forty-seven years of age.

Lady Sydenhault closed her eyes, and sat for a few minutes, as if communing with a higher power, her housekeeper remaining in respectful silence by her side.

"Now, Morgan," said her Ladyship, as she raised her head from its half recumbent position, "let me hear all you have to say."

Mrs. Morgan repeated to her Ladyship the scene which took place between herself and Brown, when the first bottle of medicine was spilt; afterwards relating how the bottle of port wine and cinnamon had been a second time taken for his medicine, owing to her own ignorance of where the true medicine was kept. Without appearing to do so, she brought prominently before her mistress, notice the remarkable fact that it was during the time her son was taking a spoonful of port wine instead of his medicine, that the temporary cessation of his cruel disease had taken place, at the period of his brother's wedding.

Lady Sydenhault sat listening with closed eyes to what her housekeeper said, one hand supporting her forehead, and although her Ladyship's face was thus half concealed, the housekeeper could clearly discern from the expressions of the mouth, and the uneasy way in which the hand was occasionally drawn across the forehead and eyebrows, that the news she was imparting was productive of pain.

When she had finished, Lady Sydenhault said:

"It seems very evident there has been some sad mistake in prescribing that medicine for my poor son, leading, probably, to all this waste of the best years of his manhood; give me the key you received from Brown, to-morrow I will submit the medicine to Sir James and his friend; meantime continue to give the port wine and cinnamon to his Lordship as you have hitherto been doing."

On the morrow a bottle of the medicine was brought from the locked up compartment, which, being delivered

to the physician, he promised to examine and to let Lady Sydenhault know whether it was one that ought to be continued; previously to this, he had a long conversation with Lord Sydenhault and gave it as his decided opinion, that his mind would gradually gain strength as his body did. That by and bye, when her Ladyship's own health and eyesight were re-established, a trip to the Continent would probably do both good, and was, most likely, the only thing needed for the complete restoration of her son to his pristine vigour.

Next day, the physician again called; almost the first words he said were:

"I have had the medicine I brought with me yesterday, and which you say Lord Sydenhault has been taking for so many years, carefully analyzed. Your Ladyship can, of course, give me the name of the man who prescribed it as a palliative of the disease under which his Lordship was said to be suffering."

"I am sorry to say I cannot give you the name of the physician. We were living at Sydenhault Hall when this medicine was first prescribed for Arthur by a physician in London whom his brother consulted on the subject, one who was said to be peculiarly happy in his treatment of such cases."

"Your Ladyship will excuse my asking by how many years Lord Sydenhault is Mr. Penryth's elder?" said the physician, starting away from the subject of the medicine.

"My son Edward," replied her Ladyship, "is two years younger than Arthur, but from the unfortunate disease under which his brother laboured; Edward has

since the death of his father assumed the management of the estates."

"I was told of this, yesterday," replied the physician, "but wished to inform myself of the fact, and now Lady Sydenhault, allow me to assure you, that whatever physician has prescribed that medicine for your son, has laid himself open to severe punishment by the laws of his country. It is neither a preventative nor a palliative, but on the contrary a medicine calculated to produce all the symptoms under which his Lordship has been suffering. I have no hesitation in saying, that provided he is not again permitted to taste this medicine, which is, in fact, a poison to both mind and body; he will, ere the year be out, be in perfect possession of all his faculties; his memory will return in all its force, and most likely his health will be improved in a similar ratio. The best course you can adopt to insure your son's speedy restoration is, as soon as your own physician permits you to travel, to take him to the Continent, and as much as possible have him surrounded by your own domestics. The most difficult point to be attained in his case, is, to restore the memory of events which happened before he became a prey to this distressing malady. This will be the last phase of returning health which will come to him. I have no hesitation in again assuring you, that his Lordship, with ordinary care, will have a sound mind and healthy body ere the year is out, and be able to assume the supervision of his own property instead of making it over to a younger brother."

It was but too evident that Lady Sydenhault was labouring under emotions arising from different sources;

joy and grief, pleasure and pain, were strangely mingled, and had the physician been at all aware of the effect his words would produce, he would probably have waited until her Ladyship's cure had been more complete. As it was, the words had passed his lips, and there was no recalling them. They had turned a page in the history of her family.

CHAPTER XXI.

'THE PEOPLE.'

HAVING received the introduction to the head of the firm in Paris, from Baron de Schawtzkind, and what interested him more, got a good price for Sydney's picture, Baron Ephriam sought the privacy of his own apartments in the Tower. There he wrote a note to Edward Penryth, inclosing Baron de Schwartzkind's letter of introduction.

These despatched, he set himself down to write several carefully composed letters to his brethren on the Continent, two of which were directed to Paris. These all contained requests that the conduct of Edward Penryth should be carefully watched, in the various cities in which his correspondents dwelt, that in particular, any words or actions of his which might bear upon the rising fame of the artist Sydney, or his pictures of 'The Spring Tides,' might be carefully noted and reported to the writer. These letters were many; and written with scrupulous care, so that at one and the same time, they might convey his meaning to his correspondents, and yet, in case of their falling into strange hands, not compromise him.

This was the less to be feared, as each one of them was written in the Hebrew in use among the Rabbis, and other learned men of Israel, hence a student of the

modern Hebrew taught in the colleges of the Gentiles, should one of these letters fall into his hands, would hardly be able to decipher two consecutive words; to such an one it would appear something like an extract from the Cabala.

Baron Ephriam having finished and sealed his letters, looked over each address carefully, with the aid of a marked list in his pocket-book, so that he might assure himself there had been no neglect, each one who could by any possibility serve his purpose, had been urgently entreated to do so.

He smiled complacently as he saw his task completed; nothing left undone that could forward his end; he knew well that the request of Nathan the Seeker would be zealously complied with, by each man to whom his letters were addressed.

Nathan the Seeker was bound by his vow, as each of his forerunners had been, to devote himself to the cause so dear to all Israel; by this vow he was incapacitated from doing his own work, but in reward for this self abnegation, each Hebrew was not only ready to work for him, to serve his cause to the utmost of his power, but considered such work would stand him in good stead "In that day when the Lord maketh up His jewels."

"Heigh ho!" said the Baron soliloquizing, as he gazed on the pile of letters before him, and stretched up both his arms, clasping his hands above his head that he might gain relief from the cramped position they had held for so many hours.

"So my boy artist, you intend to accept help from no one, least of all I suspect from the old Jew, lest he should

fancy he was paying you for offices done from pure kindness of heart. You have set yourself a high mark, my boy; you are a courageous fellow, with only your brush and your hand, to become the suitor of Lord Seymore's beautiful daughter; so be it, it will serve my purpose as well as your own, that you should marry the one, who if she is not now, will, in time, become the possessor of the Holy Stone. If the Hebrew has any power in Europe, you will gain fame and wealth enough to win the Baron's daughter, were he Duke of Somerset instead of Lord Seymore."

The Baron dispatched his letters with the intention of visiting Paris in less than two weeks from the period of their date; but weeks had become months, and yet he lingered. His work in the Tower had become sadly confused in his absence; that must not be neglected. His situation in the Tower and consequent daily intercourse with Lord Seymore, were of the utmost importance to her life's object. This completed, he made a long visit to Seymore Castle, during which, unknown to anyone of the inmates, each nook and cranny, — each old charter chest, — and modern desk, were, for the third time, subjected to a strict scrutiny, and when all this toil and trouble were ended he asked himself the oft repeated question:

"Where can Seymore have hidden the Holy Stone?"

And the answer came as it had done for years back,

"There is no other solution than that it is worn by his daughter."

Baron Ephriam is again in his own apartment; his servant brings him his letters; from among many he

selects two, both bearing the Paris post mark, each of them an answer to one of those letters in Hebrew he had despatched two months previously.

Had a stranger watched the countenance of Baron Ephriam as he read those letters, he would have said, "The man is in great trouble." The blood rushes to his head and face, making them crimson at one moment, in another, his forehead is deadly pale, his lips compressed, as if his soul were stirred by rage or hatred.

Baron Ephraim's other letters are read hurriedly, his desk locked, his servant summoned with a violent pull at the bell-rope by his side.

"Put a change of linen in my carpet-bag and take care you keep my apartments carefully locked; I shall not be back for eight, or it may be fifteen days."

Baron Ephriam is in Paris, in the house of one of his correspondents; and there he meets several other members of his tribe, all interested in forwarding the work he has in hand, doubly interested now, because they not only serve Nathan the Seeker, but they are serving the cause to which his life is vowed. If Sydney the painter marry the daughter of this English Baron, then another chance will be given for the recovery of the Holy Stone.

These men had been talking for more than an hour; their plans were all laid, laid in such a way that success was almost certain. There is no Court in Europe, not even that held by the ruler of the Vatican, in which the power of the Hebrew, falling unknown, unseen, and in silence, is not felt.

Baron Ephriam rose to go.

"I can depend, Baron Gottschaff, on your being in

Berlin with the utmost speed, as to the Empress Eugenie I suppose some of you will be able to influence her opinion."

"Yes, that is easily managed," replied one of the Hebrews, while Baron Gottschaff extending his hand towards Nathan, said:

"Farewell, in a few days you shall hear good news from Berlin!"

Baron Ephriam nows seeks the atelier of Sydney the painter, he talks for a second or two with the porter, before ascending the staircase.

"The Spring Tide pictures still retain all their popularity?" said he inquiringly, talking in a cheerful voice, as if he were sure the answer would be in the affirmative.

The porter shrugged his shoulders and shook his head, his face wearing that doleful expression, which in a Frenchman, appears almost comical.

"How is this?" said the Baron, "has the artist ceased to work, contenting himself with the fame he has gained, forgetting that men want a fresh impulse every day, and that if an artist climb to the top of the pinnacle of fame, his brush must never rest, his colours never dry?"

"Sydney, the painter," replied the porter, "works harder than any artist in Paris; but it is useless, the tide has turned against him, no man can strive successfully against his fate, his pictures are either unnoticed, or condemned in the daily journals. No one comes to the atelier now, if there is a footstep on the staircase, it is that of a man who brings him canvass or colours, those who would have given him a thousand Napoleons for a picture three months since, would not give him so many

francs to-day. Mr. Sydney is proud," continued the porter, "and will not send his pictures to the dealers, I fear he has already begun to suffer from poverty, or will soon; he should have sold them while they were in vogue, their day has passed, people have lost their taste for such paintings. It is a great pity; he is industrious and generous, always gives me more for my work without my asking him, than the other artists do when I press them a dozen times."

"He has pupils still?" asked the Baron.

"Yes," replied the porter, "the eye of an artist cannot be deceived, his skill in coloring and conception so different from other painters, is known and appreciated by his brethren; without pupils he could not live now. For weeks back no one has come to look at the pictures."

"I have arrived in a good time then," said Baron Ephriam, "I am commissioned by Baron de Schwartzkind in England to buy one of those pictures cheap, he wishes to get it for two hundred and fifty thousand francs."

"Two hundred and fifty thousand francs!" repeated the porter, his eyes staring, and his mouth gaping with surprise as he looked in the Baron's face, "why he may give you every picture in his atelier, and work all his life for you, for that sum."

"If he would," replied the Baron in a brisk voice, "my fortune would be made; his pictures are all the rage in England. I could sell each of the seven Spring Tide pictures for a like sum."

"This is good news;" replied the porter, rubbing his hands, as he spoke, "your face will look like the noonday sun as you tell that news to poor Mr. Sydney."

"I think you mistake," said the Baron, "Sydney is a silent man, and does not say what he thinks, but he knows the value of his pictures; people do not come to see them, because the price is more than they can pay."

"Perhaps," returned the porter, shrugging his shoulders as the Baron ascended to the atelier.

While this conversation was being held in the conciergerie, Herbert Sydney sat in his atelier holding a retrospective view; his pupils had gone to dinner, and as he sat alone he buried his head in both hands, thinking of the promise he had made to Ruby, of coming back to her with wealth and fame!

How near its consummation that promise seemed a few months before, and now, in the dark barren present, it seemed to be only a mockery, a vain dream, his little day of short lived fame had gone by, For three years he had worked unceasingly; the conception of these pictures had occupied every waking hour long before he had dared to use a brush to illustrate what these conceptions were; and just as people began to see that he had a painter's eye, a painter's hand, they had tnrned from him; in fact ignored him!

Had they denounced him as an innovator, or as a setter up of new fangled notions which ought not to be tolerated, he could then have defended himself,—giving his reasons for striking out a new path in his art,—perhaps convinced the public, as he was aware he had already convinced his brethren. True, there were some even among them who hated him, because, with his youthful face and slight boyish figure, he had out stripped them. Masters as they considered themselves of their art at

which they had been working for twenty years; but these were the owls and the bats. Artists in general, are large-hearted generous men, who rejoice in the progress of their profession, and are ever ready to award the meed of praise where it is due.

But an opportunity of defending himself was denied him, an attempt to do so would be an absurdity; he had nothing to complain of but neglect, and had not all those who had before striven for fame, and failed, been treated in the same way? All weighed in the balance of public opinion and found wanting!— No doubt, many of them while lying in their graves, had won the fame denied to the living men; and Herbert Sydney felt that he should be added to the number; and he drew a sad consolation from the reflection, that, after he had died of a broken heart, men would appreciate his works and put them in honored places in their galleries, and point to them, saying with regret:

"Poor fellow! the artist worked hard for the fame which denied in life we now award to him in death." And Ruby, his beloved,— his betrothed,— mayhap might stand by and know in her heart for what he had striven, even to win her. And that, had he been accorded the fame he had so well deserved, she would have been his.

Even now, despondent as he was, a new picture was already maturing in his brain; a faded sickly boy,— a half darkened room,— Ruby's face of loveliness bending over the sallow cheek and dark hair on which the firelight shone,— the nosegay of Spring flowers.

The artist started up,

"Yes, I will work to the last, she shall know that I

strove to win her while I had breath; this picture shall outshine all the others of the Spring Tide."

And then a dark shade passed over the boy's face as he thought of one he hated, one he saw every day, one, who at first, regarding him with fierce looks of scorn, now, passed him by, with the eye of triumph Satan must have shewn to his satellites, when he beheld Job mourning in his desolation. He knew not why, but Herbert Sydney coupled this hated man, with the evil fate which had fallen on himself.

Sydney met the Hebrew on his entrance with the same pleasant smile with which he had greeted him several months before.

"You are as busy as ever, I see," said the Baron, "climbing, still climbing."

"If industry will profit me, I shall not fail, but you know. "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong." (We cannot shape our own destiny, the tide goes with one man, against another.")

"Nay," replied the Hebrew, "(I hold we are nearly always masters of our own fate) (provided we have talent, perseverance is sure to conquer in the end.)

With the knowledge which Baron Ephriam possessed of the disappointments which had encumbered Sydney's path for the last two months, it was easy for him to see that the artist was fighting bravely with his fate, yet with a shade less of hopefulness than before. He knew how the boy had refused the least offer of help, and it was not the Baron's policy to allow him for a moment to imagine that he had any hand in Baron de Schwartzkind's order for one of the "Spring Tide" pictures. Sydney

would certainly be helped to the utmost ability of the Hebrew and his brethren; and the kings of the earth possessed no such power to help him as this Hebrew. who was considered a poor man in his tribe; but Sydney should never know whence the help came, should live and die under the impression that he had mounted the ladder of fame and fortune unaided.

"I hope you have not sold any of your "Spring Tide" pictures?" said the Baron.

"No," replied the artist, "people do not seem to fancy them now as they did six months ago; I had what I considered an order, although not a definite one, from the Crown Prince of Prussia, but it has melted into thin air. We artists are perhaps ready to jump at conclusions, while other men are merely making up their minds whether they can part with their money or not."

"I am glad you have not parted with any of the pictures yet;" replied the Baron, "the longer you keep them, the larger the price you will ultimately realize. I myself am the bearer of an order from Baron de Schwartzkind to buy one of the "Spring Tide" pictures, that is to say, if you and he can come to terms. The Baron offers ten thousand pounds sterling, and leaves the choice of the picture to me."

"That is double the sum I ever anticipated receiving for any of them," replied the artist; "three months ago when my fame was at its zenith, I would gladly have taken five thousand pounds, nay half the sum for any one of them, now I do not know whether I ought to take advantage of the Baron's offer. I fear this is the first and last picture that will be sold at a tithe of that price."

"As to the value of the picture," said Baron Ephriam, you need have no hesitation, I myself fixed the price, which Baron de Schwartzkind at once agreed to give. If you do not sell more than one at the same price ere ten days pass, I shall expect you to refund me half of the money; meantime here is a cheque for ten thousand pounds, which you can cash at sight. Now let us to business, I shall choose my picture."

"I should like to do what is right," said Sydney, as he stood hesitating, the cheque in his hand; "at one time I had great expectations from those pictures, I have worked hard for the last three years, making them what they are; no one with a lower motive could have worked as I have done. There are ten years work of an ordinary life on those pictures, yet I cannot conceal from myself, and I will not from you, that I have been building castles in the air; neither my pictures nor myself are now thought worthy of notice, in fact I feel that they and I, are ignored." The Baron smiled, a pleased smile, which reassured Herbert Sydney, and brought back his hopefulness better than any words could have done.

"We shall make a bargain," said the Hebrew. "I shall let Baron de Schwartzkind have his picture, because he is anxious to have it at once, and unless you wish to take a copy for yourself (which he is willing to allow, with the proviso that that picture must never be sold, but remain in your own family,) he desires that the one chosen for him should be packed up and sent to London within twenty-four hours. Now I here agree to give, and I will make out a document to the effect, ten thousand pounds for each picture which remains unsold at the end

of two years, that is, provided you take my advice as to where you study your art for the next twelve months."

"Agreed," replied the painter, "if you teach me how to realize such a price for these pictures, I shall be an apt scholar, and if you propose my leaving Paris, it is only what I have been thinking over for the past week or two. I fear my sun has set here."

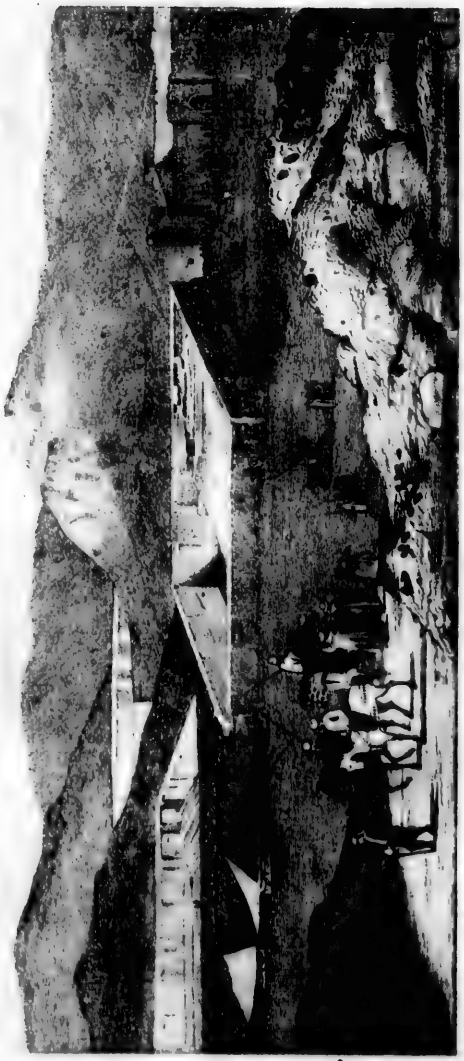
"Nay, it is not so," replied the Hebrew, "but the French are a volatile people, they were crazy over the "Spring Tide" pictures, and as the sea flows, so it ebbs; at the same time you must not leave Paris for some weeks at least; immediately they know one of the pictures is gone, if the tide ebbs now, it will flow again; we must wait and watch the result."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE UNSEEN HEBREW POWER.

A FEW mornings after the above conversation, the Emperor of the French with his beautiful Empress Eugenie were seated at their usual simple déjeuner of coffee, bread and fruit, in the private breakfast-room of the Empress; their son, then one of the handsomest boys in Paris, breakfasted with them, together with two of the Empress' Dames d'honneur. The Empress and Emperor had, as they were wont, each a pile of the periodicals of the day placed on an occasional table within reach, from which they gleaned the news while sipping their café au lait.

"Listen to this," said the Emperor, in a tone of dismay, "that picture of Sydney's which you had decided on purchasing some time ago has been sold to Baron de Schwartzkind for the enormous sum of two hundred and fifty thousand francs; I think it is the very one you chose, here is the description: 'The first of the series, two girls ascending a rock, the smaller and fairer of the two turning round and shewing a shoeless foot and torn hands to the other, the faces of both expressing merriment at the novelty of the situation.' The picture," continued the Emperor, reading from the paper he held in his hand, "was purchased by Baron Ephriam for his friend, Baron de Schwartzkind, and is now on its way to England.'"



POOLS OF SOLOMON.

"That is extraordinary!" replied the Empress, "what an enormous price! surely that Mr. Penryth who said the pictures were condemned as daubs in England must have been mistaken?" The Empress spoke with a look of regret, both eyes and voice making her words a question.

"Of course he was," replied the Emperor; "who ever heard of an Englishman who knew anything about painting; the Jews are the only people in Britain who know anything about the fine arts, and you see how they appreciate Sydney's pictures. Sydney is most likely the child of a French or Italian mother; a man wholly English could hardly possess such talent. I am told his French, both as to accent and pronunciation, is perfectly pure, his mother must have been French. I must go to see those pictures of his," added he, after a moment's pause.

"Oh they are beautiful!" said the Empress, clasping her hands together, and looking upwards in a dreamy sort of way, as if she was recalling to her mind the beautiful faces and grand scenes of which she spoke. "And they speak to you, and tell the story in such glowing, almost articulate words; they are perfect nature,— they are alive,— you fancy you hear the dashing of the waves, — the words of prayer,— the wail of the girls,— I am so sorry I did not secure my picture. Oh that stupid Englishman!"

The Emperor smiled, as he looked in the beautiful face of his wife, her color a little higher, her eye a little brighter than usual, from the excitement she felt in having let her favorite picture (one which a few weeks before

she had decided on placing in one of her own private apartments,) slip from her grasp. "Say rather, stupid Eugenie! who, with a keen appreciation of the beauties of nature and art, joined to talents which few possess, could allow her judgment, so seldom at fault, to be influenced by a man who probably would not be able to tell a Rubens from a Titian."

"Oh it is too provoking, I had so set my heart on that picture, and now it is gone."

"There are six still left; you can have your choice of those, and if you wish for one of them, now is the time; the first having been sold for such a large price and to a well-known connoisseur, the others will soon follow."

The Empress signed to one of the servants, who brought a port-folio containing the engravings of the pictures they were talking of, placing it on the occasional table by the side of Her Majesty.

"Come and help me to choose which I shall take," said the Empress, addressing her husband. "You shall have it sent to me early to-day, will you not?" saying so she looked in his face with the bewitching smile which never failed to gain what she desired.

"I suppose I must," was the reply. "Are you prepared to give two hundred and fifty thousand francs for it?"

"That is such an enormous sum! He will not surely expect to sell them all at that price?"

"Will it be becoming in the Empress of the French to offer less than an English subject can afford to give?" asked the Emperor, looking good humoredly into the beautiful eyes raised to his own.

"Ah! I did not think of that," said with the sweet bewitching look, "you must decide all questions where my dignity as Empress of the French is concerned."

When the Empress returned from her afternoon drive, the picture she now so earnestly desired to possess was hung in the most conspicuous place in her private drawing-room; the Empress' choice having fallen on the picture where the girls are seen looking out to sea, in pleased wonder, as the ships sail by, in the glowing light of the departing sun.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE ARTIST'S HOME.

THE public prints are again filled with descriptions of the "Spring Tide" pictures, laudations of the artist, comments on the large prices he is realizing.

A week from the time of his first visit, Baron Ephriam is again in Sydney's atelier, the artist's face is now bright with hope. The Hebrew looks round the room.

"You have lost three of your pictures. I heard that the Empress sent for hers, where has the other gone?"

Sydney placed a telegram in the Baron's hand, it read thus:

"*Send one of the pictures of 'The Spring Tide' for the palace of the Crown Prince of Prussia, and draw on the Banque Nationale for the price.*

Signed,

Adolph Braubach."

"'Nothing succeeds like success.' There is truth in the old adage yet, and now there is no time to be lost, you must be off to New York; if the four pictures still in your possession do not leave you then, they are mine at one half of the price paid for the others."

"I will do as you bid, the more readily perhaps, as I have all my life had a desire to see the United States; America has been one of my dreams since my childhood; since I was able to think on the subject, I have always

associated the minds of men there with the vast territory they live in, somehow fancying their minds must correspond with the extent of their mountains and rivers; latterly an object connected with my art has deepened this desire. Since I have been in Paris I have seen many American women of rare beauty, large lustrous brown eyes, a wealth of dark hair, and features which remind you of the old Greek models, my friends who have been in America assure me such is the common type of beauty there." The Jew smiled,

"There are men of large mind, and beautiful women to be found everywhere; whether in America they are more abundant than in old Europe, you will be able to judge six months hence, but of one thing you may rest assured; a man of talent has twice the opportunity of distinguishing himself there, that he has here, surrounded as he is by people who are envious of his popularity, and ready to detract from his merit in every available way. The field in America is so large, and the people so anxious to encourage genius in all its phases, that it is fast becoming the resort of talent, whether we speak of letters or the Fine Arts."

While Baron Ephriam spoke, Sydney seemed lost in thought, at last rousing himself he answered,

"Yes, it is better I should go; I will go at once."

"By the first boat?" asked the Baron.

"Yes, it is as well that I should do so, in fact, if I am to go, the sooner I am off the better."

"Then," said Baron Ephriam, "if you will allow me to do so, I will telegraph to a friend in New York to take apartments for you in the house where I live while I am

there, it is a plain but comfortable house in Washington Square, the apartments I occupy overlooking the Square; if not one of the most fashionable, it is one of the most pleasant town residences in New York, the house well kept, the people civil and obliging; if you are inclined to like simply furnished comfortable rooms I think they will suit you."

"I am sure they will," replied the artist with a smile, "Baron Ephriam has not yet seen the sitting room, dormitory and library I have occupied for nearly the last three years and a half. I have not dined yet, this is my dinner hour, I take dinner in my own apartments, will you come and see my residence, and the fare on which I live? I would ask you to dine with me, but that my dinner waits me when I go home, and is only ordered for one; besides the fare is peculiar."

"It is immaterial to me," replied the Hebrew, "whether it is the fare of a Prince or of a peasant; there are few things, except bread, which the Hebrew eats with the Christian. I shall however cheerfully go and have a look at your snuggery, and while you eat, we will talk over your plans for the journey to America."

The artist led the way down one of the side streets, and entering a house which was evidently inhabited only by people of moderate means, he mounted to the attics, the Hebrew following him; arrived at a little landing lit by a sky-light in the roof, and unlocking a door he requested Baron Ephriam to enter.

The room was uncarpeted, but exquisitely clean, two windows, curtained with white muslin, gave an air of brightness to the apartment, a small iron bedstead in

one corner, a book-case, a table and two chairs completed the furniture, one of the chairs was a little larger than the other and had arms, this Sydney placed for the Baron, requesting him to be seated, saying:

"You are in my castle; with the aid of a little dressing closet, this constitutes my sleeping, sitting room and hall; I shall now show you my dinner, which is unvarying."

Saying so, he opened the book-case, the glass doors of which were lined with crimson cotton, one-half was filled with books, some of which were in elaborate and elegant bindings, the other contained a few plates and other utensils for the table; taking therefrom a small loaf of bread and a tumbler of milk, the artist sat down to eat his dinner.

"For six months in the year I dine on bread and milk, for six months I have bread and soup. Having now seen my suite of apartments and my fare, you need have no fear of introducing a troublesome guest to your friends in New York, the simplest furniture in a house where Baron Ephriam has dwelt, will seem elegance itself to me, the plainest fare, luxury."

"I am pleased to see," replied the Hebrew, "that you have had courage to live thus; it is in part owing to this self-denial that you have attained to the skill in your art that has placed your name among the first in Europe; the time for such self-denial has now passed, half of the money which you will receive for interest on that you already possess, will enable you to live in a style suitable to the phase in society in which the painter of 'The Spring Tide' pictures must move. I will take care that

your apartments are ready for you; there is an address," said he, handing Sydney a card, "to which the cases containing your pictures may be sent; my friend will visit you on the day after your arrival, perhaps our next meeting may be in New York, until then good-bye."



OLD BRIDGE AT THE FARM IN JERSEY.

CHAPTER XXIV.

VILLAGE LIFE IN JERSEY.

RUBY and Monica had been for several months inmates of Madame Dupont's establishment. Ruby had taken a class of the younger children, and, in addition to this, had given music lessons to several young ladies in the village, the fees arising from which were one of the many sources from which Madame Dupont recruited her supplies for the support of the orphan children.

Two of these young ladies were especial favorites with Ruby. Amy and Constance Marchmont were the daughters of a lady whose husband gave himself out to be an officer in the Preventive Service, and was seldom at home more than a week or two in the year; for the past two years he had not been able to visit his family even for a day.

Mrs. Marchmont was a woman of refinement and education, her parents who were people of the farming class, descended from some of the early settlers in Jersey, possessed the land they tilled; hence, it was natural, that with their easy means, they should have given their only child a better education than was thought necessary by the simple people among whom they lived.

Mrs. Marchmont had spent several years of her girlhood in one of the conventual establishments in Paris,

and it was on board the steamer in returning from school there, that she became acquainted with Mr. Marchmont who accompanied her to Jersey, was introduced to her parents, and soon after asked her hand in marriage. He remained there several weeks, and, finding that he could not persuade the old people to hear of their child leaving the Island, at last consented to allow her to remain in her early home, he himself visiting her as frequently as circumstances would permit.

From the time of his marriage, Mr. Marchmont allowed his wife two hundred pounds a year from his salary, of which that sum was said to form the greater part; he was then in hopes of promotion in the Service, but promotion never came, and two hundred pounds, which formed a liberal income in the early years of her marriage, now when she had two almost grown up girls, and three little boys to provide for, required to be carefully managed.

Ruby was a frequent visitor at Mrs. Marchmont's, and knew all the family details; she desired earnestly to impart the knowledge and accomplishments she had herself acquired to these two girls, devoting to this purpose three days in the week, the time she could spare from the services she had assumed in Madame Dupont's Institution.

The appearance of these young ladies formed a striking contrast to that of Ruby, tall and dark, with the olive complexion she had so often admired in Herbert Sydney; these girls looked at her with their brown eyes from under their dark eyelashes with the same glance, the same expression she had seen in those of Herbert; the hair too, neither black nor brown, but of a colour

that at times looked the one, at times the other, their very voices as they pronounced her name, calling her Ruby, as she had taught them to do, would occasionally make her start, with a pleased thrill, as the very tone and accent of Herbert Sydney.

Monica was equally pleased with her new home, the task assigned to her was to take care of the sick or delicate children, there were not many such it is true, the place was healthy and well kept, the children's diet simple yet plentiful, and if a sickly child reached Madame Dupont's establishment, the free air on the Jersey hills, and the care and comfort with which it was surrounded, soon made the weak strong, the sickly rejoicing in health.

Ruby had been several months in Jersey when a visit to Mrs. Marchmont's father and mother, who lived six miles in the interior, was proposed, and Mrs. Marchmont came to request Ruby to accompany them.

"You will only see an old fashioned farm house, cows, sheep and goats, but you will find every thing very different from what you have seen in your old London home; or even in this Jersey village."

"I am sure I shall enjoy the visit very much," replied Ruby, "I have wished for an opportunity of going into the country ever since my arrival, and Amy and Constance are such friends of mine, that being with them, would constitute pleasure to me, independent of the change from village life to wandering about among the woods upon the hills."

The old couple were delighted to see the beautiful stranger, and with great naivety praised Ruby's fair skin and bright complexion, and the wavy folds of her pale

brown hair, telling her, in their simplicity, they had never seen any one half so beautiful.

Among the precious things which hung above the mantel-piece, in their best room, was a miniature, painted on ivory, which Mrs. Marchmont had left there in the early years of her married life; this miniature so haunted Ruby's memory, as resembling some one she had seen and known, that during her stay there, she would take it down, again and again, from the nail on which it hung, trying to realize of whom the pictured face reminded her so forcibly, but it was impossible with all her trying.

The face was that of a handsome intellectual looking young man, one she fancied she had known well, yet if so it must have been in her dreams. Herbert Sydney,—Colonel Ponsomby,—even Mr. Penryth were all in their turn gone over in her mind's eye, and each discarded; these three men were all dark, two of them sallow; while this face might either be called fair or brown, certainly not dark.

That face troubled her with pleasant, yet sad memories, which she deemed must have been gathered from her dreams; that pictured face and the thoughts it stirred, although dim and undefined, came to her often and often during the rest of her stay in Jersey.

A pleasant week was spent at the old farm house, then, and many times after, when from Saturday afternoon until Monday morning, Ruby went with Amy and Constance Marchmont to pay a hurried visit to their grandfather and grandmother. Each time she went, Ruby's first steps were directed to the quaint, high mantle piece,

above which, hung the ivory picture, vainly trying to solve the problem, where she had seen that face in life.

'Thaniel Reil in his cutter, paid frequent visits to the island, bringing merchandise which was quickly exchanged for butter and other country produce for which Jersey is noted.

Through an interview with Geoffrey, Mrs. Reil was always able to send intelligence to Ruby of her father's movements and health, while Ruby on her part regularly wrote long loving letters to that dear father, which were posted by the old fisherman in Southampton.

Winter had passed, and Spring was passing, when Monica herself paid a visit to London and the villa at Bayswater, saw the housekeeper, told her as a matter of course that she had come for Miss Seymore's summer clothing, made glad Jasper's heart by telling him that his darling's face was now blooming again with rosy health, her eye as bright as in the olden time, when a happy child, she clapped her hands and laughed aloud with delight, when she found an unexpected show of flower blossoms in the garden bed she called her own.

Within the hour Monica had again departed, gone to the city, drawn more money, and was once more safe on board 'Thaniel Reil's cutter, waiting for the tide which was to take them out to sea on their way back to Jersey.

Constance and Amy Marchmont became very dear to Ruby, and when thoughts of home came again, as come they would whether bidden or not, and she imagined the happy time when Edward Penryth married to another, she would be back again in her own pleasant villa at

Bayswater; she used to try and make the girls promise they would come and pay her a long visit there.

"You must both come and spend at least a year with me, and I will return with you, and bring you back to this dear Jersey village."

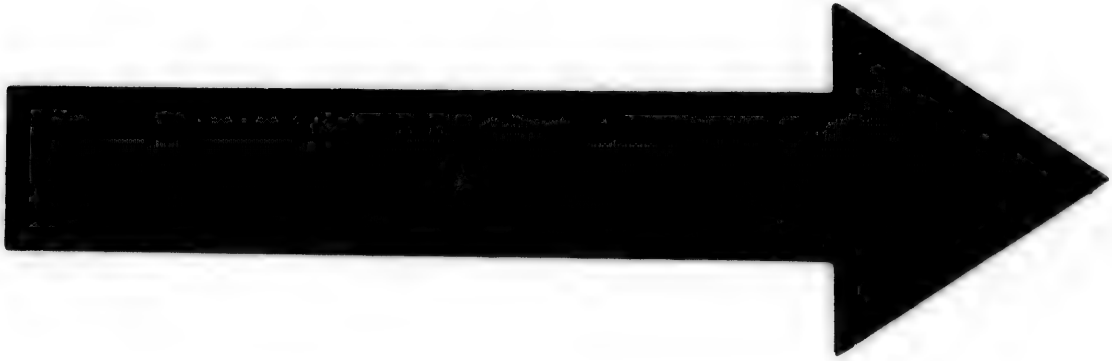
The two girls were more than pleased at the prospect of living for a whole year in a fine house at the West end of London; Ruby herself, even her clothes were so different from any thing they had ever seen in their Jersey home, that they imagined the house she lived in would be a kind of fairy palace, and so in truth it would have been to them, coming from the carpetless floors and straight backed wooden chairs of their own home, with its bare walls, and tables devoid of ornament.

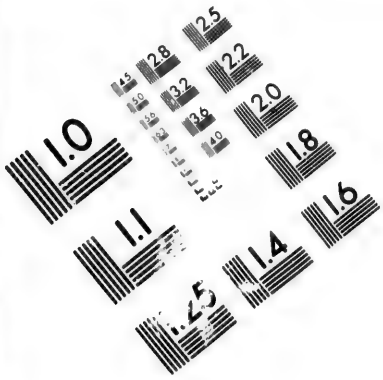
But on such occasions Mrs. Marchmont would shake her head with a grave, almost sad air, and say:

"It is very kind of you to ask my children, it would doubtless be a great advantage to them, as they have improved so much during the time they have had the benefit of your instructions and companionship. They already speak English with a facility that makes me almost ashamed of myself. I who was taught to speak and read English with care, whilst those girls never had a lesson until you came here, except the hurried one I occasionally had time to give them myself; but my girls must not think of such a thing, they must not set their minds on it, it would only tend to disappointment; their father, although an Englishman himself, has a prejudice, almost amounting to hatred, against his country, its inhabitants and their language. Since the day of our marriage he has always told me he never would consent

to my visiting England. In my younger days England used to be a dream to me; and a visit to its shores, particularly to Hampshire where an aunt of mine then lived, was one of the things to which I looked forward with a most ardent desire. I have long known it was impossible, and pleased myself with the many happy ways in which we can pass our holiday times in Jersey, on the hills and in the woods up at my father's farm house. I know the children would enjoy a visit to your home perhaps more than anything else, and if their going depended on me alone, I would look upon your invitation as a great boon; but it depends entirely on the will of another, and their father would never forgive me, if, in his absence, I allowed his children to visit England. He wishes them to be French in their manners, language, and their mode of thought. Although he speaks French but indifferently, he never utters an English word, during the short visits he is able to pay to Jersey. I have often during the last six months," continued she, "reproached myself for allowing my children to learn the language of their father, because, I feel almost certain, were he here, he would not have permitted them to do so. No, my dear Miss Seymore, their intercouse with you must be restricted to this island, and I trust when you do go once more to live in your English home, you will come, now and then, to see us in the Jersey village where you have done so much good, and are so much beloved."

On such occasions the girls would murmur, "Are we for a whim of our father, whom we only see once a year, or it may be once in two years, to be shut up all our lives in this little Jersey?"





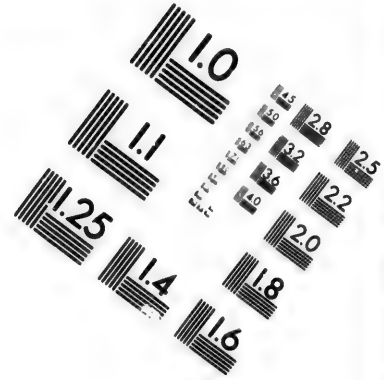
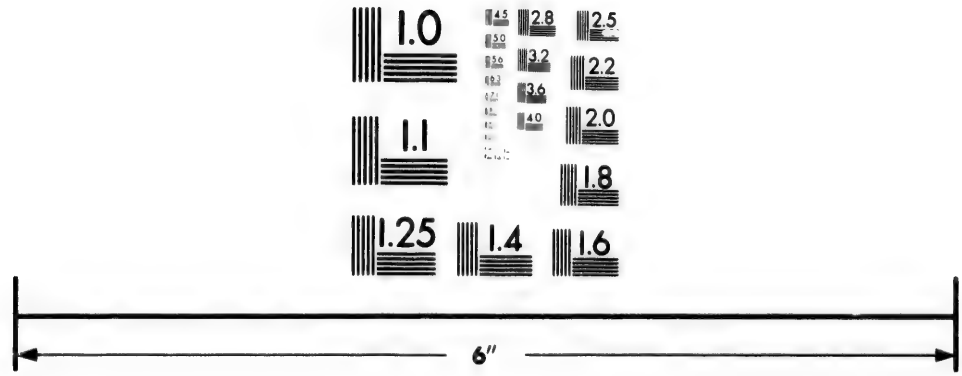
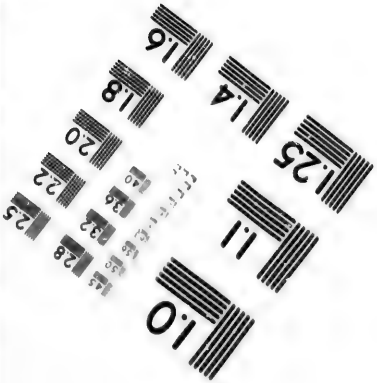
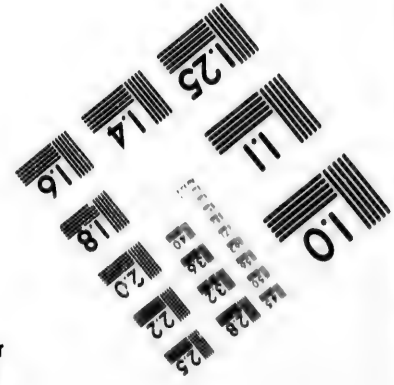


IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (MT-3)







Photographic Sciences Corporation

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WEBSTER, N.Y. 14580
(716) 872-4503

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The birthday of Constance was near at hand, and they had determined to celebrate it with a party of their young friends from the village, Ruby proposing that for the amusement of their visitors, they should get up some charades.

Mrs. Marchmont who was always ready to forward any scheme that promised pleasure for her children, proposed that a lot of light dresses which she had not used since the first few years of her marriage should be converted into costumes for the occasion, and, with a view to this, gave up her keys that her two daughters and Ruby might go to the lumber room, and select what they wanted from a trunk which she indicated by describing it as the one with the letters made with brass headed nails on the top.

To the lumber room they went; the trunk was opened, and dresses of various colored tarlatan, head dresses of flowers and feathers, gold and silver spangled muslins were speedily unfolded, shaken out, and declared to be the very things they wanted.

The two girls were laden with half the contents of the trunk which Ruby shut down and locked; while doing so her eye was attracted to the letters on the top, and forming them into words she there read a name familiar to her; pronouncing it aloud, she said, "Arthur Penryth. Is that the name of a relative of yours?"

"We do not know," replied Constance, "that trunk has always been in this room since I can recollect; I have known it as long as I have known myself."

On reaching the sitting room, Constance, as if pursuing the thought awakened by Ruby's question, asked

her mother to whom the trunk belonged, repeating the name which Ruby had read.

"I cannot tell," said her mother, "I only know that it belonged to an acquaintance, or rather friend, of your father's, who gave it to him that he might pack up in it a lot of presents both for the household and myself, which he brought here the first year of our marriage. The miniature which you admire so much at my father's," continued she, addressing Ruby, "I found in the trunk, curiously enough, hidden away under a newspaper put loosely in as a lining to the bottom. I suppose the picture must be that of some relative of my husband, but I have never asked him a question on the subject, as it gives him such evident annoyance to speak of his own family, It was my knowledge of this that made me carry it up to the farm house where it is not likely ever to meet his eye."

Some months after the charade party, Constance Marchmont had the misfortune to sprain her ankle so badly that it occasioned her violent pain, and swelling in the limb; confining her to a recumbent position day and night, bringing on fever and alarming symptoms. For weeks her mother, sister, and each of the servant maids in her turn, sat up all night waiting on Constance, so that the bandages covering the injured limb might be constantly kept wet. The weather was hot and exhausting, and Mrs. Marchmont accepted, with gratitude, Monica's offer of coming to attend Constance, and making this her sole duty; thus she could snatch an hour or two for sleep during the day, when some one else was in attendance

on the invalid, doing away with the necessity of one of the family sitting up through the night.

Monica had been acting as sick nurse to Miss Marchmont for upwards of a week, when one evening a gentleman's voice and footstep, heard from the hall and staircase, told the unusual incident, that a visitor had arrived.

"It is my father," said Constance, replying to her own thoughts, "I wonder whether he has brought us any presents, I hope he has brought something for mamma at all events. The last time he came he brought only his sweet self; as to Amy and me we do not care for his presents, we have never had anything we particularly cared for since we grew up; but mamma does care, and I hope he has brought something for her."

She stopped short, "you look surprised, Monica, by the way in which I talk of one of my parents, while you know I am so sincerely attached to the other, but it could not be otherwise: I only see my father at long intervals; and, when I do see him he is chary of both kind looks and kind words. I remember quite enough of complaints, which I have heard him make from time to time, of our countrified manners, and our want of good breeding; but he does not seem to remember that we have only peasants and villagers from whom to copy; and that we have never been farther from the village in which we live than our grandfather's farm-house. He carries his dislike of his own countrymen to such a height that we have never been permitted to visit the places on the island where they reside. Mamma tries to make light of this, and tells us there are pure pleasures con-

nected with our home, that we can never find equalled elsewhere; this is no doubt true, but it is also true that there is an irksomeness almost unbearable in living where you only see to-day what you saw yesterday, through all your past life; where your aspirations after knowledge or improvement of any kind are stunted for want of food. Until Miss Seymore came to Madame Dupont's Institution I had never met anyone so well informed as my mother; and her knowledge is necessarily very limited; educated as she was at a convent school which she left at seventeen."

Monica sat gazing with wonder at the girl as she spoke; yet each word she said attested the truth she complained of. Some time after his arrival Mr. Marchmont came into the room, spoke a few words, more of reproof, than condolence with his daughter; said it was very careless of her having sprained her ankle, and without sitting down, returned with Mrs. Marchmont to the room adjoining the one where the sick girl lay.

Shortly afterwards Amy brought into the room a note addressed to Miss Seymore, which she gave to Monica, requesting her to take it at once to the Institution and deliver it to Ruby, saying: "I will take your place by my sister's couch until you return."

Monica did as she was bid, and delivered the note to Miss Seymore, who on opening it read with surprise,

"Dearest Ruby,

Please do not come near us for a few days; until I myself go to see you at Madame Dupont's. I will explain the reason of this when we meet.

I can only do so in words, it will not bear to be written, Constance and Mamma send their love.

Yours affectionately,

Amy Marchmont."

Mr. Marchmont came regularly to see his sick child once a day accompanied by her mother, on which occasions he spoke a few words, stood for a second or two beside the sofa on which she lay, and then retired with his wife, into the sitting room before spoken of.

Monica could not help contrasting the handsome face and form, the courtly air of the man, with the simple manners of his wife and children ; his very clothes were objects of wonder to her ; Lord Seymore, punctilious in all things pertaining to a gentleman, never wore cloth or linen more choice.

On his entering the room, Monica always withdrew to the little hall from which the room was entered, so that she might form no obstruction to unrestrained intercourse between the father and his child ; this was wholly unnecessary, his visit never extended over two or three minutes.

During the three days she was in the house after Mr. Marchmont's arrival, Monica asked herself at least fifty times : " How is it possible that this gentleman, with his fine manners and handsome clothes, can bear to see his children dressed in the garb of peasants, their manners only a step removed from those of the villagers among whom they live ? "

She did not wonder now at the harsh words, and grave, stern face of Constance, as she heard her father's voice

and step on the day of his arrival. A hush prevaded the whole house from the hour of Mr. Marchmont's return. Amy, the only one able to sit at the piano, was not permitted to practice because it would disturb the august ears of her father; as to his desiring such a thing as to hear her play, this was simply out of the question; it never occured to Mr. Marchmont to inquire into the progress his children made in this, or any other part of their education. The three boys, aged four, five and seven, were kept in the garden as much as possible, where their mother would run out every ten minutes lest they should play in the hot sun; and yet would not dare to bring them into the shelter of the house; in case a light laugh or shout of merriment should elicit from their father the surly question, asked with a scowl: "Why am I disturbed thus? Why are these children not kept out of hearing?"

On the afternoon of the third day after Mr. Marchmont's arrival, Monica was sent for hurriedly by Madame Dupont. She found 'Thaniel Reil waiting her arrival, who informed her that Lord Seymore was lying in his apartments at the Tower dangerously ill; he had been seized with a fit of paralysis the day before, and the physicians gave it as their opinion, that, although there was no immediate danger, yet it was not at all likely his life would be prolonged above a few weeks.

'Thaniel Reil on his own responsibility had hired a little steam coaster, as the quickest way of conveying the intelligence to Miss Seymore, and bringing her to her father.

This was sad news for Monica to impart to Ruby in

the present state of misunderstanding which existed between her father and herself; yet it must be done, and to Monica's surprise, Ruby, with a face pale as ashes, which told how her heart was torn by this fearful intelligence, went about the preparations for the journey with the coolness and presence of mind which belonged more to a woman of forty, than to a girl of her age.

"We will not wait to pack anything up," said she; "Madame Dupont can have that done, and send these things after us. I shall send for a carriage to convey us to the shore, and while I bid good-bye to Madame Dupont and the pupils, I wish you to go, and ask Mrs. Marchmont whether I can say adieu to her and the girls on my way to the boat."

In a few minutes Monica was standing beside the couch where Constance lay, deeply grieved at the prospect of losing her kind and skilful nurse, both she and her sister weeping bitterly as they said to each other in low voices:

"Perhaps we shall never meet Ruby again, it is not likely she will return to Jersey, and very surely we can never go to England."

Attracted by the low hush of voices coming from the couch of her daughter, Mrs. Marchmont came in carefully shutting the door of the room she was leaving, so that the exacting lord and master of the establishment might not have his sensitive nerves disturbed by the voices of his children in their hushed conversation.

"What is the matter? What has occurred?" said she, in a low voice, half alarmed at seeing the tearful eyes of her children.

Monica at once explained the evil tidings which had reached Jersey concerning the precarious state in which Lord Seymore lay, adding that Miss Seymore would be there in a few minutes to say good-bye to Mrs. Marchmont and the young ladies.

"Oh Monica!" exclaimed Mrs. Marchmont in a low, terror stricken voice, her face becoming red and pale alternately, "Do go as quickly as possible, and tell Miss Seymore not to come here upon any account, she can have no idea of the mischief it would cause, were a young English lady like her seen in this house by Mr. Marchmont. His dislike to his own countrymen and women is a monomania, he has found out that you are English, he heard you talking to Constance before you went away; you can have no idea how angry he is, I have never in my life seen him so irritated, he talks of sending us all to the farm to live, and will not believe that you were acting as one of the nurses at Madame Dupont's, but insists that you are one of the English residents of St. Heliers. Do, good Monica, go and excuse us to Miss Seymore as soon as you can, and beg her not to come, or even look near the house. Good-bye, good-bye."

The poor woman almost hustled Monica out of the room. In descending the stair-case she was met by Mr. Marchmont, who appeared to her as if he were aware of her being in the house, and was awaiting her in the hall.

"You are an Englishwoman?" said he, inquiringly, looking in her face and over her whole person, as if he would take a note of each thing she wore, from her black bonnet down to the hem of her black dress.

"I am, sir," replied Monica, the last word coming out involuntarily, as if it were a natural homage paid against her will to the dress and manners of a man she certainly disliked, perhaps despised.

"You come from St. Helier," said he. "Were you sent for to nurse my daughter?"

"I am neither from St. Helier, nor was I sent for to nurse your daughter," was the reply. "I live at Madame Dupont's establishment at my own cost; I am no hired nurse, but came of my own free will."

Mr. Marchmont deigned no reply, but stalked upstairs with a face of more composure than he had worn when he first spoke, his action in turning so abruptly away from Monica would have seemed in another man of the same rank a piece of gratuitous rudeness; in Mr. Marchmont it appeared simply his way, nothing more.

Monica was fortunate in meeting the carriage occupied by Ruby before it reached Mrs. Marchmont's dwelling, and hurriedly explaining in the best way she could the seemingly ungracious message of which she was the bearer, motioned to the man to drive on towards the quay.

Half an hour later the little vessel was steaming with all its power in the direction of London.

CHAPTER XXV.

NEW YORK.

WE have seen how the machinations of Mr. Penryth against the painter of "The Spring Tide" pictures had succeeded almost to a miracle. He had taken every pains to make his scheme as secure as it was covert; he was furnished with introductions to the highest authorities in the land, and had he not been watched by the Hebrews, he would probably have done Herbert Sydney unto death or destruction. But the Jewish power is spread like a net-work over every civilized land, amid the frozen snows of Russia,— under the burning sun of Chili, with Mohammedan and Christian, his power is alike irresistible, what the Israelite wills to succeed, will flourish as the green bay tree.

The old words which the Prophet was forced to deliver against his will, 'Be thou strong, be thou glorious Israel!" are in full force to the present day, the mysterious down-trodden people raise the hand, and the nation or man they would help, rise in power as the great swelling billows of the ocean.

Herbert Sydney was hedged in by the Hebrew power which to each enemy said "So far thou shalt go and no farther," and when the Hebrew raised his hand, Edward Penryth was nowhere,— nobody.

Yesterday, he triumphed in his iniquity, to-day he

looks in dismay at the structure he has been months in raising, fallen down like water spilled on the ground; but Penryth is not easily crushed.

Herbert Sydney had by his industry and talent won himself a world wide fame, was set up on high; the public prints teemed with his praises; the President, the men of war, and those who stood highest in the great Senate of the land, all came to touch the hand of the young artist, and bid him God-speed.

The President of the United States was the first to choose one of the famous pictures of "The Spring Tide," one of the merchant princes of New York the second, and then the Grand Duke Alexis of Russia ordered the third to be sent to the Imperial palace at St. Petersburgh.

In seven months from his arrival in New York he received a cablegram requesting him to send the last of "The Spring Tide" pictures to the prince of bachelors, the Duke of D———.

The seven original pictures of "The Spring Tide" have gone from Herbert Sydney for ever. He has only copies remaining, which he is under promise never to repeat, but to keep in his own family, as a memorial of his art.

Mr. Penryth is in London, at the Club; he has determined his blind mother's punishment should not cease yet; true it is many months since he saw the big tears rolling from her blind eyes upon the hands that, clasped together, seemed to beseech help by their very feebleness; he recollects it well, sees her feeble form bent over the arm of the chair where she sat, even as in reality he saw it months ago; he sees the foolish looking dreamy

eyes of his brother, and, even now, in imagination, he halts again outside the half shut door, and listens with exultation and triumph, as the poor imbecile replies:

"No, mother, I remember no church, only that one," and looking in, through that narrow space between the wall and the door, he sees the finger of the grown man childishly pointing at the window through which he is looking, to the tower of the Church in Bayswater. As these thoughts cross his brain, the selfish wicked man laughs, a laugh which could it be heard by his kind, would awaken in them feelings as if it came from Satan; and he mutters in a subdued, yet congratulatory tone as if he would assure himself that this scheme of his, more diabolical even than the last, has not failed, cannot fail.

"Ha! she flattered herself I should be at her beck all her life, bowing and scraping without fee or reward. She has found her mistake now, without one of her kindred around her who can understand a sentence she says, or give reply other than the silly laugh of an idiot, or worse still, the mock solemnity which tells that the fool is answering according to his folly. And her pet Arthur, how is it with him? Has that iron constitution of his, that so long stood out against the small doses, been proof against the three large doses each day? No, the mother's darling is now doubled up in some corner, hugging his knees with his claw-like hands, his unkempt hair falling over the idiot staring eyes, while with lolling tongue, he reiterates the low pal-lal which this precious medicine never fails to make its victims give utterance to. Ha! ha! ha!" laughed he with sardonic merriment. "Where are your schemes now, Lady

Sydenhault, for your son's aggrandizement, for his assuming the seat to which he was born forsooth? A lordly presence truly that curled up wretch would make in taking his place as a British peer."

He pulled some writing paper towards him and wrote thereon:

"*Mr. Penryth desires Lord Sydenhault's servant, Brown, to come at once to "The Carlton," where Mr. Penryth wishes to see him.*"

Having addressed this to "Mr. Wm. Brown, Sydenhault Villa, Bayswater," he desired the servant in attendance to have it sent, and bring an answer immediately.

The note was not placed in an envelope, merely folded and addressed, and on being delivered at the Villa in Bayswater was carried at once to the housekeeper, Mrs. Morgan, Brown being abroad with his master.

Mrs. Morgan read the note with feelings in which a mixture of fear predominated; fear, not for herself; she, in her own person, had no cause to fear Edward Penryth, she was an upright, conscientious servant, one who did her duty as unto the Lord, and be he evil or be he good, she knew well Mr. Penryth could not interfere with her. But, she feared for his elder brother, the one whom she now believed in her heart had been the victim of this man's treachery for nearly nineteen years; she had no choice however, she had Lady Sydenhault's orders to tell what she knew as to her Ladyship's and Mr. Penryth's health in body and mind, but on no account to give the least clue to their whereabouts. These orders, God helping her, she would obey in the spirit and the letter; she knew that Mr. Penryth would rave and storm, she had

heard him do so often in the old time, and stood it then with cool indifference; she could do so again.

Going to her desk she wrote:

"*Mrs. Morgan respectfully informs the Hon. Mr. Penryth that William Brown is on the Continent in attendance on Lord and Lady Sydenhault.*" Addressing this she delivered it to the cabman.

Mr. Penryth did not storm and rave, as he read the housekeeper's note, but he clenched both his hands, pushed them to the utmost length of his arms on the table at which he sat; grinding his teeth and biting his under lip till the blood came. He paced up and down the room for some minutes until his passion had in some measure died out, and then, stopping short, he rubbed his hands together with a brisk action as he exclaimed in a quick tone, "Aye! Dick Halbert is the man. Dick would sell his soul for a hundred pounds; that is a happy thought of mine," and snatching up his hat, in a second or two he was out in the street, walking in the direction of Bayswater.

As Mr. Penryth was entering his mother's Villa, he was met in the hall by the housekeeper and one or two others left in charge of the house; his policy was to be suave and polite, it was not often so, he was naturally proud and overbearing to inferiors and arrogant to his equals; it was only when he found himself in the presence of his superiors, or when it was absolutely necessary to accomplish some purpose, that he assumed his present courtesy of manner; he knew, or fancied, it would stand him in good stead now.

His mildness was appreciated by Mrs. Morgan at exactly its worth, she had often winced under the arrogance of his look and tone, and she knew well why he touched his hat with an almost familiar "How do you do?" as he entered the hall.

"Come into the drawing-room, Mrs. Morgan, I want you to tell me all the news you can about Lady Sydenhault and my brother. On leaving Paris some two months since I was obliged to go to New York, my letters must have gone astray at that time." Mr. Penryth continued speaking as he entered the drawing-room, and threw himself with an air of weariness on one of the sofas.

"Pardon me, Sir," said Mrs. Morgan, "there must be a mistake there. If you heard from my Lady two months ago, you must have been aware she was on the Continent, it is six months since my Lady and his Lordship left London."

"Six months!" replied he, with an air of surprise which was not all assumed. "How did her Ladyship venture to travel? By whom was she accompanied?"

"Her Ladyship had the usual number of attendants, and went in a party with Lord and Lady Roseheath; of course your Lordship is aware that the Countess is fully restored to sight?"

Had some one felled him to the earth, Edward Penryth would have felt it less. He started to his feet, for the moment losing all control over himself, at the consummation of what, to him, was a calamity, and one on which he had never reckoned.

"How?— when?— what?— how did that occur? When did that take place?

"Your Lordship is overcome with surprise and gratitude," said Mrs. Morgan, who could not resist the temptation of letting him know, in a covert way, that she understood exactly how far his gratitude went; he had often trampled her feelings under foot, and the woman almost rejoiced that she was able to tell him, in looks, if not in words, that his character, so far as it concerned his mother's recovery of sight, lay open before her.

"Yes, very grateful indeed," said he, hurrriedly. "How did it occur? What was done? I thought my mother was declared stone-blind ten years ago."

He scarcely knew what he was saying, his mind dwelt so much on the calamity which had overtaken him in his mother's recovery of her sight, that it was some minutes before his thoughts could arrange themselves into anything like an orderly form. Her Ladyship, while so blind that she knew not day from night, was a powerful protector of her weak son. He would have been an inmate of a mad-house the first year of his illness, but that she clung to him amid all her blindness, never allowing him to leave her vicinity night or day. How often since the day appointed for his marriage with Miss Seymore, had Edward Penryth cursed himself for his pusillanimity, that he had not effected by stratagem what he dared not attempt in open day, in the face of man; namely, to place his brother in a mad-house, where the keeper could be bribed to make him the maniac Edward Penryth wished him to be.

"The trip to the Continent," said he to himself, "is

all explained now. I should not be surprised at hearing next that Arthur's medicine has been thrown to the dogs, and he is where his mother would have him, among the prophets."

"Her Ladyship," said the housekeeper, "has for years entertained hopes of recovering her sight, it is fully ten years since Sir James Clark had her eyes examined by an oculist, who told her then, that if she had patience, the opaque lenses could easily be removed when the proper time came, and explained to her the signs by which her Ladyship would know when the cataract was ready for removal. The day you left Sydenhault Villa, sir, for the Continent, in September last, she felt unmistakeably the signs of which she had been forewarned."

He could scarcely contain his rage, longed to knock the woman's head against the wall as she spoke; what an egregious fool he had been. He had seen his mother go out to drive and take Arthur with her, only a few minutes after he had left her weeping in her own apartment. Oh! had he but known then why she went, how easy it would have been to play the cards into his own hands. With his mother confined to her bed in a dark room; what a simple matter to have sent Brown on a message into town, and by the offer of any worthless bauble, wiled Arthur into the street; once there, the coast was clear. He almost stamped with rage when he thought of the golden opportunity he had let slip, merely that he might vent his ill-humour on the old woman who by his absence had absolutely put her foot on his neck. By a great effort he calmed himself sufficiently to say:

"And Arthur, how is Arthur? does he get better or worse?"

"My Lord is quite well, thank God," said the woman in a calm tone; although her heart beat fast with the knowledge that the intelligence she was imparting would be anything but good news to Mr. Penryth; "the medicine which your doctor, (as she spoke she could not resist putting emphasis on the word *your*), prescribed for his Lordship, was declared by Sir James Clark, and several other physicians who held a consultation on Lord Sydenhault's case, to be poison for mind and body; he never had a dose of it afterwards, and almost every day we could observe a difference. A month from the time Sir James Clark saw him, he was a changed man, and before he and Lady Sydenhault went to the Continent we had a family dinner with Sir James and Lady Clark, Sir Benjamin and Lady Brodie; and Lord Sydenhault took his place at the foot of the table, and, Mr. Johnston says, behaved in as becoming a manner as ever his father did."

Mr. Penryth's blood was boiling within him, but he preserved a calm exterior.

"Was my mother in bad health? What reason had she for visiting the Continent? She neither speaks French nor German; she never had any desire to leave her own conntry before; on the contrary, my memory goes back to times when such a trip was proposed for us all, and she would not consent to it. Did Sir James Clark advise a residence on the Continent for her health?"

"No," replied the housekeeper, "the Countess' health required no change, she has neither felt nor looked so

well for the last twenty years, as she did during the few weeks before she left home, but Sir James Clark and Sir Benjamin Brodie, considered change of scene beneficial for his Lordship; although his mind was recovering itself faster than they anticipated, his health was poor." The woman spoke with hesitation thus far, she knew that at the last, Lady Sydenhault would gladly have avoided going to the Continent; it was part of the last sad fancy of her son's, viz: that he should find there, what he had sought so long in his wandering mind, which finally decided her to undertake the tour. "And," Morgan added, speaking freely as was her wont, "besides my Lord was very anxious to go, he wanted to visit all the old places where he had been so happy in his youth, during the five years he was from home, before the late Lord's death."

"What madness," said her hearer, speaking his thoughts aloud more than replying to the housekeeper. "For a woman of the Countess' age, just recovered from a blindness of twenty years, to go abroad with a man who has been so long next door to an idiot, and in no better company than that of servants."

"There you are mistaken, my Lord," said Mrs. Morgan, drawing herself up a little, "Mr. Johnston has gone abroad with her Ladyship; of course, he cannot be classed as a common servant. Her own Lady's maid, Summers, is also in attendance, and by Johnston's advice, William was taken in addition to Brown, so that her Ladyship might have her own coachman."

"So Lady Sydenhault has taken a carriage with her?"

"Yes, my Lord, a new travelling chariot made for the occasion."

This intelligence was the climax. Mr. Penryth was by nature grasping and avaricious, his mother, exactly the reverse; during his father's life-time their income of seventy thousand pounds a year was spent freely, since then the charge had been mostly in his own hands, and he would gladly have kept their expenditure within ten thousand a year, but his mother could by no means be persuaded to adopt his views, that is to say letting the Manor house in Glamorganshire, and the shooting box in Scotland. The poor lady clung with a death-like grasp to the idea that her eldest son would yet recover; every year she expected the next would see his restoration to health, and when that expectation had faded away, she still prayed and hoped on; determined to the last, that if the blessed day ever arrived when he would think, look and talk, like other men, no stranger should be able to say: "I have rented your shootings and your rivers, go and seek recreation elsewhere."

The utmost Edward Penryth could effect, was to keep the expenditure within thirty thousand a year; by this means he was preparing a fortune for himself, by which in the end, he hoped to become a rich man. Now, for anything he knew, she might not only spend her regular income of seventy thousand a year, but scatter part of what he had been amassing for himself. He walked up and down the room with long strides, he must vent his wrath or die; it would be lowering his dignity should he for one moment give utterance to his rage in presence of that

meek looking woman, who stood, holding him with her eye.

"Why do you remain here? Begone, woman!" said he, turning upon her with a fierce look as he strode up and down the room.

Mrs. Morgan departed, carefully shutting the door as she went out, and then Mr. Penryth stamped and swore, until, utterly exhausted by his passion, he threw himself on a sofa, to think over what must be done to extricate himself from this terrible dilemma.

If he were not prompt in action now, in a few months he would be nobody, a second son, without a farthing, except the pittance which would come to him as heir apparent, and then a hideous, hated knowledge that only he possessed, and which he had hidden for so many long years beneath autumn leaves and winter snows, came up before him as bright as if it had always been abroad, before the face of men on the green earth, and he exclaimed in his bitterness, "Heir apparent, how long shall I be that?"

He lay for hours thinking over first one plan and then another, by which this hated brother could be got rid of in secrecy and safety, and he cursed his own cowardice, that it had not been done long ago; cursed his mother, the only human being on this earth who had loved him on and on unvaryingly. Cursed her, because she had so cared for his weak brother, that day or night she would have him in her own apartments, even sleeping in an inner room, so that she might ever be sure of him; rising in the dark night, that she might pass into this room, touch his face, and know that he was there, and in the

day, which was alike dark to her, keeping him ever by her side, whether she drove or walked, pleasing the poor weak man with the idea that he was necessary to her life, that he led her about, as none other could.

Edward Penryth lay with closed eyes for hours thinking over what was to be done, and trying to arrange some plan by which he could escape this doom of poverty and insignificance. His mind was so troubled that it could not dwell on one point long enough to enable him to arrive at anything definite; he would arrange and rearrange, and then all would be chaos again. Yet through all, a small leathern case which had been in his possession for years, the contents of which he had examined many and many a time, only to lay them aside again, and hope they might not be needed, the red Russian leather,— the key,— the lock,— would all come before his mind's eye more painfully vivid than ever he had seen them with the orbs God gave him for sight.

He could, even there, as he lay on the sofa, in imagination lift the poinard and touch its steel, take the toy-like pistol in his hand, examine the lock and assure himself that both were ready for service. And then would come the startling thought of what might be, did one of those little accidents, (carefully guarded against, yet ever occurring), point to him as the one who had made use of those dangerous servants.

The picture his fancy drew was too horrible, and with almost a cry he started to his feet. The room was nearly dark, the day fast waning into night, and the drawing-room was only lighted through the glass doors which opened into the conservatory; he made a few steps to-

wards the door, indignant with himself that he could so permit his imagination to weaken him down to childishness. "It has ever been thus," said he aloud, "I have been a child, and a coward all my life, but for this, I should be a free man to-day." His arm was cramped with the uneasy position he lay in. "Fool! fool!" said he grinding out the words between his teeth, and raising the stiff arm, he threw it above his head, touching, as he did so, the crystal pendants of the chandelier, making them clang and ring out tiny music.

"Fool!" was hissed in his ear, by what he believed to be a demon come to tempt him to his doom, while a clawlike hand with pointed talons rested for a moment on his head. He rushed through the open door into the conservatory, out to the lawn, and down the drive, in wild affright; the postern door was open, he fled with frantic steps, stopping not for a moment until he was out in the busy street, under the lamps, among his fellowmen.

When Mrs. Morgan came, accompanied by Robert, that she might shut the doors, and make all safe for the night, she found an old parrot who was particularly clever at repeating what he heard, sitting on the chandelier screaming, and seemingly well pleased with the change he had made, from his cage in the conservatory, to the freedom of the drawing room.

Mr. Penryth dined at the Carlton, talked as usual with the friends he met, did exactly what he was accustomed to do, not a shade more, not a shade less of reticence, or of gaiety; none could have told that the least cause for anxiety pressed upon him, far less imagined that matters,

which were as life or death to him, prosperity or poverty, hung at that moment in the balance. He went to his own apartments at a late hour and retired to his bed, not to sleep, that in his state of nervous excitement must come by utter prostration, but again to arrange some plan for the future, which must be put into execution within a few weeks, if possible within a few days.

His mind was in the same state of chaos as it had been while he was lying on the sofa in his mother's drawing-room. He could not account in any way except by attributing it to a supernatural cause for the word 'fool!' which had been hissed in his ear, the claw-like hand which for an instant had touched his head. Was it his good angel who had set the bird free, and made him perch on the chandelier? It may be, that the bird's cry and touch saved him from a great crime.

The midnight hour had passed away, the early morning had gone also, and Edward Penryth in his darkly curtained room, slept — a troubled sleep.

He imagined himself on the Continent, in the suburb of Dresden, he knew the place well, he had been there many a time when Arthur and he were students, and went to visit friends, English residents in Dresden. He fancied Arthur and he walking together, Arthur the bright boy, who drew pleasure from each circumstance of life as he passed along; his dress, that of former years; he holds his student's cap in his hand and waves it as he walks.

Edward Penryth's mind, even in his dreams, is filled with envy of his gay and handsome brother, who, by the merest accident, is rich and titled, while he, is nobody.

At Rugby, he knew this, and in their students days, the jealous feeling had grown until it became a demon, made him its slave. It is written in the Holy Book, "the way of trangressors is hard." Edward Penryth felt it so, even when his schemes went on smoothly.

As he dreamt, the hatred which had filled all his manhood raged in his heart. He is now in fancy at the edge of wood, a deep ditch divides it from the highway, he looks down and shudders as he looks at the green slimy mud, into which the least incautious step will plunge him, he hears the noise of rushing waters, he looks up and beholds a mountain torrent hurrying down impetuously and filling the ditch. He takes a step behind his brother, his hand is already raised to give the fatal stroke which will push the other from life to death, when, with a loud call for him to follow, Arthur springs to the opposite bank,

"Jump, Edward, there is no fear."

"You can swim, I cannot."

"Neither can you; wait, I will make a bridge."

Quick as lightning Arthur is in the wood and returns with a fallen tree which he throws across the chasm; they are both on the trunk looking down on the dark waters as they surge and roar beneath. Satan whispers, but Edward is a coward, without Arthur's help he could not cross that swaying trunk; he stumbles, and is down among the turbid waters. Arthur is a famous swimmer, he is battling with the stream,— in a moment they climb the wooded bank, under the great pines which skirt the edge of the forest.

Edward clasps the leather case, which he fancies to

have been the companion of his boyhood, he urges his brother to greater speed, lest the coming darkness should overtake them ere they reach their home.

"Wait, Arthur, I will climb one of these tall trees, and see whether I cannot discover a short path through the forest."

Edward is on the top of the highest tree, ah! not a soul to be seen, they are alone there in the deep forest, everything is propitious. He opens his leather case, examines the pistol.

His brother stands, with his back towards him; he fires, Arthur leaps high in the air, and then falls heavily to the earth.

Edward is looking on the white face and sees the life blood welling out on the grass, he will "make assurance doubly sure," and he buries the poniard in his brother's heart; the warm red stream springs up, dabbling his face and linen, he wipes both face and shirt, but the blood stain is there still. He seizes the body, so lately full of life and joy, and smiles grimly, it will never again come between him and the title or the land, he draws it by the feet over fallen trees through deep brush wood, a groan issues from the head as it knocks against the sharp points of the rocks that jut out through the sward; he flies with frantic haste, he fears the dead thing and hurries on that he may bury it out of his sight, he feels no remorse, his heart is full of the joy of demons; he reaches the stream, and pushes the body into the deep water. He is now seated on the banks of the Seine, and the people look at his blood-stained face, and the red marks on his linen, and he tries to wash them out in the waters that

are lapping up among the pebbles at his feet; it is impossible, the blood is clogged and hard, the stain will not go. The body is out there floating in the clear water, so close that men are rolling up their trowsers and wading out, to bring it to the shore; but it will not be caught, it eludes them all, and comes gently on and on, until with something between a sigh and a groan, it is laid, by the gentle stream, down at Edward's feet, and men look, with awe-struck faces, and ask, "was there ever anything like this?"

The waters, the crowd, and the pebbly bank have passed away; he is in the morgue standing by his brother's body, his own face and linen clotted with blood; but the dead man's body is white and beautiful, his brown hair thrown off his forehead in soft wavy folds. With the incongruity of dreams there are an English Judge and Jury present, and the Attorney General calls in a loud voice to Edward Penryth to put his hand upon his dead brother. He cannot, and he struggles to keep his hands clasped behind his back; but he is surrounded by strong Englishmen, who seize his right hand and place it on the flesh, in an instant the white body is covered with blood welling out from the wound which he remembers so well making in the forest near Dresden.

A great cry is raised, and he hears the word "Guilty" pronounced in such tones as might come from the trump which shall waken the dead, and the English people around him shout

"Guilty! guilty!"

And his dead brother's lips form, and his still tongue utters a low word,

"Guilty!"

And he knows that that deep tone will never leave his ears, but ring on through time and eternity, "Guilty! Guilty!"

A rope is round his neck, he is on a high gibbet, is swinging there with no covering on his eyes, nothing to protect him from the hooting of the multitude, the jeers of the English mob who shout his name aloud, well pleased to see a man of his rank swinging there, and he hears their cries of fierce anger as they point their fingers in his face and yell out "Guilty!"

Human nature can endure no longer; he starts in horror from his bed, the spell is broken, and for the first time in his life he thanks God that he is yet unstained by the blood of his brother.

By the dim light of the waning moon, he gropes his uncertain way to his despatch-box — it is opened,— he draws out the leather case which contains the instruments of his intended crime, shivers the dagger-blade to atoms on the hearth; and, having drawn the charge, throws pistol, dagger, haft, fragments and all in a scattered shower into the court-yard beneath his window.

CHAPTER XXVI.

LADY SYDENHAULT'S LETTERS.

IT was at a late hour on the day after his first visit, that Edward Penryth again presented himself at his mother's Villa. The good angel who was commissioned of God to give him his dream; had enabled him also to make a firm resolution — founded it is true on the fear of what might accrue to himself — that he would never imbrue his hands in his brother's blood.

But he would by no means give up his plan of having the guardianship of the estates in his own hands. There were means to which he could resort, and in which he would be aided by tools who did not know him to be Edward Penryth, and who, therefore, could not expose his part in the transaction. His mother and Arthur being on the Continent, made it much easier for him to put his plans into execution than it would have been had they remained in England.

Edward Penryth is again in his mother's Villa, in the same room he had occupied the preceding evening, he looks up at the chandelier with a sort of nervous dread; he is no believer in the supernatural, yet he cannot divest himself of the idea, that the voice he had heard, the touch he had felt there, were not mortal. He is talking to the housekeeper:

"I was so much disappointed at Lady Sydenhault's

absence yesterday," he began, "that I quite forgot to ask you to shew me the letters you have received from her Ladyship."

Mrs. Morgan did not answer, and Mr. Penryth, fancying she must have misunderstood him, said, with an inquiring look:

"You hear from her Ladyship, of course?"

"I do, sir; I have a letter from Mr. Johnston, written by her Ladyship's commands, each week, and my Lady has honored me three times, since her departure, by writing me herself."

"I wish you to shew me these letters, Morgan," said Mr. Penryth, never for a moment doubting that they would be submitted to his perusal.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said she, "but I cannot by any possibility."

"What!"— said he, in a loud tone; both voice and look expressing the surprise he felt; "do you mean to say, you will not shew me my mother's letters?"

"I do, sir," was the cool reply, "I could not take such a liberty with my Lady as to shew her letters to anyone."

Mrs. Morgan knew well there were passages in each of these letters which Lady Sydenhault would on no consideration have submitted to the eyes of any one, except the person for whose information they were written. She had her Ladyship's commands, that her address was not to be given to Mr. Penryth, or any one else; were she to allow those letters to be seen, the reader from their dates and post-mark, would at once have a clue by which to find her Ladyship's place of residence.

"You are surely not aware of the impertinence and presumption of your conduct?" said Mr. Penryth, in a voice more conciliatory than angry. He knew the firmness of the woman he had to deal with, that it would be easier to persuade, than to coerce her into what she considered would be out of the line of duty to her mistress.

"I do not mean to be either impertinent or presumptuous, sir," was the reply, "it would be clearly against my interest to be either; but, unless instructed so to do by her Ladyship, I most surely cannot show her letters to any one."

"You are a faithful servant, Mrs. Morgan," said Mr. Penryth, schooling his voice so as not to betray the anger he felt, "but in the present instance you have overshot the mark. I am Lady Sydenhault's son, and virtually master here; it is not at all likely that my mother would write to a servant what she would hide from one who may be said to be her only son."

"Her Ladyship's letters to me, sir," replied Mrs. Morgan, "contain only what a lady of her rank might be expected to write to a woman who has served her Ladyship to the best of her ability, for forty years. It is not for me to judge by whom her Ladyship would wish her letters to be seen; therefore my duty in not shewing them is quite plain."

Mr. Penryth smiled; a bitter, angry smile it is true, but one he wished Mrs. Morgan to construe into a sign that he was more amused than angry at her over scrupulousness.

"Be it so, for the news contained in your letters I must

wait until I see my mother in person; I suppose the same reason will not extend to Johnston's epistles; shew me the last you received from him."

"Excuse me, sir, I do not correspond with Johnston or any other of her Ladyship's servants; Mr. Johnston's letters were written to me by her Ladyship's orders, and must be kept by me as carefully as her own."

"You are the most extraordinary woman I ever heard of. I suppose I must give you credit for being the most faithful ser ant in England, and as shewing these letters seems to be incompatible with your idea of duty, I must content myself with receiving my mother's address from you."

"I am sorry to say, sir, I cannot give you that satisfaction either; her Ladyship went abroad on purpose to live a life of quietness and seclusion." As Mrs. Morgan spoke, her face might have betrayed to a closer observer of human nature than Edward Penryth, she was telling only a part of the truth, when she mentioned Lady Sydenhault's wish for privacy. She knew that her Ladyship had gone to the Continent, that Lord Sydenhault might search for a phantom which she felt sure had no existence, except in his own brain, and which she hoped would become fainter and disappear altogether, as he saw the different places, where he fancied the scenes to which he so often alluded had happened. "Her last words in parting with me were 'observe strictly what I have told you, give my address to no one; if I can help it I will not see an English face, except those of my own servants, or speak an English word but to my own household, until my return home.'"

"Do you mean to say," exclaimed Mr. Penryth, in louder tones, than he had yet used, but striving to assume a calm exterior, very foreign to the rage he really felt in being thus balked by one whom he considered his own servant, "that the Countess ordered you to conceal her place of abode from her own son?"

"I do not, sir; if I am not mistaken, her Ladyship thought that you had gone abroad. Her Ladyship" —

"Enough! I command you to give me Lady Sydenhault's address instantly."

"I am sorry it is impossible for me to obey her Ladyship and yourself, sir; I prefer doing my duty to my mistress."

"You will either deliver that address into my hands this instant, or I shall dismiss you from the house."

"It is not in your power to dismiss me," replied the housekeeper, at last fairly incensed by the arrogant manner in which Mr. Penryth spoke, his voice as he thundered out his words, and the menacing appearance of his face, shewing more plainly than mere speech could have done, that he looked upon her as his servant, to dismiss, or retain according to his pleasure; "if you eject me forcibly, I must go; but I shall at once inform her Ladyship of your actions, and, I have no doubt, her lawyer will have orders, by return of post, to replace me in the situation I have held for forty years."

Mr. Penryth knew the estimation in which his mother held Mrs. Morgan, and that an insult such as he talked of would be highly resented by her Ladyship; it would not bring him the address he wanted, and he turned from her, muttering some words which she did not hear,

and, walking through the conservatory, vented his ill-humor by kicking over one or two of the flower pots as he passed out.

On Mr. Penryth's departure, Mrs. Morgan went to her room, and, taking from her desk the letters she had received from the Countess, read such passages as the following:

"My dear son's mind and memory are strengthening day by day; the physicians assure me his recovery is certain. I trust we shall not in our wanderings meet with Mr. Penryth; I am sorry to say that Lord Sydenhault understood but too well the hard things Sir James Clark said of the physician by whose advice Mr. Penryth acted with regard to Lord Sydenhault's health."

Again, in a letter written some months after the first,

"Lord Sydenhault is as sensible as ever he was, with the exception of the idea of having friends here whom at first he expected to find; and he now blames these terrible medicines as the cause of his losing those whom he considers necessary to his life's happiness; it seems strange that this delusion should outlast all others, yet it has not only outlasted them, alas! every day it becomes more firmly rooted in his mind."

The housekeeper folded her letters, and again locked them up in her desk, thanking God that He had given her strength to hold fast her integrity.

Mr. Penryth was not to be foiled in this way. He went to his mother's banker, then to her lawyer; both of whom either could not or would not furnish him with the address he sought. His next essay was made by going down to Sydenhault Hall, where the steward at

once furnished him with what he wanted: Lady Sydenhault was in France, her address, Brest.

Lord Sydenhault hurried back to London; there was little more to be done, only to secure the assistance of his accomplices, and with them pay a visit to Brest.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE TALL SAILOR OF BREST.

LADY SYDENHAULT and her son Arthur, were seated at luncheon in a house they had hired for a month at Brest. This was the last place where Arthur hoped to find what he sought so earnestly; the effective remains of the five years spent abroad in his youth, without a knowledge of which, his life must be one of trouble and unrest.

For some time past, Lady Sydenhault had carefully avoided any reference to the subject which more than any other occupied her mind, because she considered the whole, the dream of a fevered imagination. Perhaps for anything she knew, through all the years when Arthur used to sit so listless, silent and abstracted, he was making images to himself and communing with them, until they became part of his life, so to speak, fixed on his eye and brain so firmly, that, at times, she feared these creatures of his fancy would never wholly depart.

Physician after physician was consulted privately by her Ladyship, many of whom, when they approached the subject with Lord Sydenhault, were convinced he spoke of scenes and people among whom he had lived, and still loved with undying affection.

Lord Sydenhault avoided talking on the subject, with his mother, because he knew what her opinion was,

he himself never lost hope that some little accident would afford him a clue to what he sought, and then, when all was clear as day, he would say: "There is the phantom I followed so long."

Lady Sydenhault and her son were talking of an evening visit they had promised to pay to a family resident in Brest, the mother of which had been an old school friend of Lady Sydenhault's, nearly fifty years before.

"It looks as if we were to have rain this evening," said her Ladyship, "how shall we manage our visit to Madame de Salaberry in the rain, without being able to use the carriage? I suppose Jim is still unable to put his foot to the ground?"

"Not exactly," replied Arthur, "he is able to use his foot; William had him out to-day, but he is certainly not fit to be put in harness; however, those Sedan chairs we have so often laughed at will form a good substitute."

"Yes, I did not think of that, but there must be two additional men provided, Wiliam and Brown can carry one, but it would be offensive to Johnston's dignity to ask him to do such a thing."

"There will be no want of carriers," said her son, "there are plenty of idle fellows about all the time. That reminds me that there are two sailor-looking men whom I have seen for some days hanging about here, one of them is an Englishman; both are very urgent in their desires to obtain work of any kind, they seem decent, quiet fellows, I think we cannot do better than employ them."

"Certainly, it is but right we should do so, if one of

them is an Englishman, he has a right to be employed by his countrymen in a strange land."

Lord Sydenhault rang the bell, and gave orders for hiring a couple of Sedan chairs to be at the house between eight and nine o'clock, adding,

"Yourself and William can carry Lady Sydenhault, and, as for me, if you can find that English sailor and his friend who have been so anxious to obtain work for the last day or two, it will be as well to give them an opportunity of earning a few francs."

Brown bowed and left the room, going at once in search of the chairs, which were easily found, the sailors appearing very grateful for the work thus put in their way.

The Englishman was tall, the other short and stout.

"How will you do?" said Brown, "I am afraid you will not be able to carry equal, one of you being so much taller than the other."

"On the contrary," said the tall man, who seemed to have his wits more about him, and to understand his work better than his companion, "in a place like Brest, where you are either going up or down hill, it is better to have one carrier tall and the other short; in going up the hill, the tall man goes behind, thus keeping the chair level, in going down he carries in front; in either way his height enables him to keep the chair in an easier position than if both were of the same size."

"What you say is likely to be the case," replied Brown; I suppose you are accustomed to the work."

"Accustomed to the work," repeated the tall man; I have carried chairs, off and on, for twenty years in

Brittany; I wish I had the price of all the chairs I have carried, I should be a rich man."

"Well," replied Brown, "you will not fail to be here in time; a few minutes before nine."

At the hour appointed, both chairs were at the door. Arthur handed his mother into the first, taking off his hat, as he returned her smile through the chair window, while she was being carried off.

The Sedan chairs are pictorial curiosities in their way, and for the benefit of those who have never seen any of them, I must give an account of the Sedan used in Brittany up to the present time. They look as if they had belonged to the age of Louis XIV, and had been transmitted, not very carefully, down to the quarter of the nineteenth century with the traces of the gorgeous painting and gilding still upon their panels. The chair is fantastically shaped, and consists of an oblong box with a door on one side, and windows on the other, three of which are generally curtained with faded silk; but, except as a matter of necessity, an English lady or gentleman would scarcely enter into so crazy a conveyance. There is no choice however, and accordingly into this box she is compelled to crush her velvets and silks when she is going out for the evening, or has to pay a visit on a wet morning, there being no such thing as a coach for hire to be seen in Brest. As there are no lamps in the streets it is necessary to be accompanied at night by a lantern which is supplied and carried in advance by a boy or man belonging to the carriers; in this way the cortege wends its way on dark nights through the narrow smoky passages of Brest.

The man with his lantern in front, and the fantastical Sedan with a lady or gentleman in a considerable state of trepidation inside, borne along by two lumbering men whose gaunt shadows are ever and anon cast into gloomy entries and porticoes as they are suddenly lighted up by the feeble gleams from the lantern.

Considering the scantiness of demand for this accommodation, inconvenient as it is, and the number required to keep up the supply of such an establishment, no less than three persons being indispensable for each journey, it might reasonably be supposed that the service of the Sedan would be, comparatively, rather expensive. The reverse is the case; you may be conveyed thus, in pomp, across the town to your destination, wherever it may be, and your chair, together with its three attendants, will call for you, and convey you home again at night, in the same ceremonious manner, for the small charge of three or four francs.

Lady Sydenhault kept her eye on her son's handsome face, while he stood waiting for his chair to take the place at the door from which her own had been carried; thinking, as the light from the lamp in the hall fell on his dark brown hair and finely cut features, that she had never, even as a boy, seen him look half as well.

Poor woman! she little knew that her eyes would ache in the daylight, and weep in the dark, ere her son's handsome face would meet her sight again.

As Arthur is being carried along at a rapid pace by the two men, something in the eyes of the tall sailor strikes him as being familiar. His gesture, seen through the window of the Sedan, as the man motioned to the

others to take their places, and told them in surpressed tones, through which streets they were to go; spoke so strongly to Lord Sydenhault's eye, of one he knew who moved in a far different sphere of life, and whom he believed then to be hundreds of miles distant, that the thoughts called up by this striking resemblance were almost painful, and certainly anything but flattering to his own family pride.

It was fully a mile to the Chateau, where Madame de Salaberry dwelt, in the suburbs of Brest. These carriers, accustomed as they were to move in a sling trot, generally accomplished such a distance in a quarter of an hour, but although the men did not spare themselves, but pushed on at a quicker pace than usual, half an hour, even more passed by, and yet they had not reached the Chateau.

Arthur strove to look through the window into the dark road; he feared the men being strangers might have missed their way, or even mistaken the place. A bell rope hangs inside these chairs that rings a bell on the outside. Lord Sydenhault made use of this once, twice, without its being taken any notice of; at last a continued pulling had the desired effect, the chair was set down, and the tall man, who, as Lord Sydenhault now saw, carried the lantern, opened the chair door, and asked, in a husky surly voice, which sounded in his ear very much like a feigned one, what the gentleman wanted?

"I fear you have missed your way, my good fellow," said Arthur. "We ought to have arrived at Madame DeSalaberry's in twenty minutes at most; it is double

that time since we started, and," added he, looking out through the open door, and peering as well as he could into the darkness, "I see you have indeed mistaken your way, you are in the lower road beneath the town, while Madame De Salaberry lives in the one leading to the hills."

"You are right there, Sir," replied the man in the same husky voice as before, "but we cannot go by the high road, they began to blast rock in that direction this afternoon, there was no other way by which we could reach Madame De Salaberry's than this, it is a round about of three miles, and will take us at least half an hour longer; if I had known this before we started, I would not have come with such a load for six francs, far less the beggarly three your servant agreed to give me."

"Be comforted, my man," replied Lord Sydenhault, "You shall make your own charge, I myself will pay you, and give you exactly what you believe your time and labor are worth; it is a tiresome job running up and down these hills with this lumbering Sedan, and a great fellow like myself inside it; go on and do not fear, but you will be paid well for your work."

The men are moving on again, it seems to Lord Sydenhault, with accelerated pace.

"Poor fellows," said he to himself, "that tall, surly looking man has put them on their mettle; I wish I had not stopped the Sedan or spoken to them at all; he, at least, need not complain of his work, the weight of the lantern can be no great burden."

On they went, it seemed more like an hour than half an hour, and the men moved more slowly now than at

first, as if they were getting tired ; at last the chair is set down, the door opens, and Arthur is told by the tall sailor in terms, the rudeness of which accords well with the husky feigned voice, — to come out.

The three men are round the door of the chair as Lord Sydenhault steps out on to the road, the night is now clearer than before, the stars have come out, and their pale light makes the objects around a little more distinct. Arthur looks round, they are certainly not near Madame De Salaberry's house or any other human habitation ; there is neither tree nor fence to be seen, they are evidently on one of the high, barren headlands, four or five miles beyond the town.

" Where have you taken me to, fellow ? " said Lord Sydenhault, a little excited at the situation in which he found himself. " You must certainly be aware that this rocky height is not Madame De Salaberry's, or any other house."

" No words," said the tall fellow ; " we have taken you where we meant to take you, come, tramp on, you must use your own legs for the rest of the journey."

Arthur now felt sure that the man had been drinking, and that his long walk in the open air had not put him into a good humor ; he was determined to make the best of it, and desiring the man to walk on with his lantern in front, prepared to follow him.

" No, you'll go in front," said the fellow with cool insolence ; " you mean to make your escape, do you ? "

Lord Sydenhault turned to the other men, and addressing them in French, asked them if they knew where they were ? The cool reply was,

"We do, but you don't."

He saw that he was in the hands of ruffians, he knew that in Brest he had the reputation, that most Englishmen have, of being rich, and even of carrying large sums of money on his person, he had probably been brought to this barren rock for the purpose of robbery, perhaps of murder. He immediately struck out into a run, endeavoring to rid himself of the three men who clustered around him; they were tired with their walk, he was fresh, and for months back had been regaining his lost strength, he did not at all doubt being able to out match them in a race towards the town.

His design was seen through, and prevented in an instant, the three men keeping behind and beside him, while the tall sailor seized him by the arm, forcing him down towards the edge of the rock.

Lord Sydenhault was fully equal in height to the tall man, and, turning suddenly round, grappled with him, endeavoring to free himself from his grasp.

The sailor struck him a hard blow on the chest, which for an instant almost stunned him; quickly recovering himself, he seized the man by his bushy beard, thinking by this means to gain the mastery, and, without coming to handicuffs with the ruffians, make his escape.

The beard and whiskers came off in his hand, disclosing to Arthur's astonished eyes, features as familiar as his own —those of his brother! a blow from whom at that instant felled him to the earth.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

DICK HALBERT'S SHIP.

WHEN Lord Sydenhault recovered his consciousness, he was lying on the floor of some dark closet which, he could feel, was moving with him, the splashing of water close by sounding in his ears. He was sure he was on board ship; he heard the sailors calling to each other as they walked on the deck; he tried to stand up, but found this was impossible, he felt around him, and came to the conclusion that he was in some compartment of the vessel where, amid the darkness he would have to remain, until his brother, or the ruffians in his employment, saw fit to release him. He knew that it was to his brother's art in crime he owed all his wasted years. Foiled in his attempts to deprive him of reason, Arthur had no doubt, he was being carried, either to immediate destruction, or worse still, to be incarcerated for life in a mad-house. He lay for hours thinking over his miserable fate, and, unselfish to the last, mourning more for the distress his absence would cause his mother, than for the doom which hung over himself.

Daylight at last dawned, and from a borrowed light, he saw that he was lying in the cabin of one of the coasting craft used by fishermen in the Channel Islands. Some time after, he heard his brother talking to some one close to the cabin door.

"I tell you that place must not be opened until we arrive at Guernsey," were the first words he heard.

"And I tell you, Tom Holling," replied the other, "that I will have no murder committed here, fast or slow. We shan't be at Guernsey in this contrar win afore to-morrow, and do you think I'm going to keep the man i' that close hole wi'out either food or drink all that time? If I did, he would never chew bacca again; no, no, my jolly tar, depend on't I'm skipper here, and no one shall sail my ship but me; there'll be no foul play done in it. I'll not have the 'merry mariners that trade in human souls,' making their beds by my hammock on cold nights, taking away my wits first, and then sending my ship to the bottom. No, no, Dick Halbert knows a trick worth two o' that, it's punishment enough, I'll warrant, for a gentleman like him to be stolen away from his home, wi'out being killed by inches."

"I tell you he is a fool, replied the other, "and his mother, who is another fool, wants to put him into his brother's place, and thrust that brother into the world without a penny.

"And that brother," replied the skipper, "is Tom Holling, and can take precious good care of hisself, I'll warrant. Well, I've no business with your quarrels, I'll make good my part of the bargain as long as you keep to yours, and don't forget the day the rhino comes due. If you don't pay in advance, when you come, you'll find the bird flown.

"You shall have your money regularly in advance," said the other, "I have given you a hundred pounds already, and you shall have another as soon as that fellow

is in safe keeping within your tower, as you call it, in Guernsey ; if that is not good pay, I don't know what is, and precious easily earned too."

"The pay is good enough, I don't complain o' that, but the risk is greater than the pay. If that chap was to get the freedom o' his feet again, he's not such a fool but he could gi' the police good scent of where he had been, and who he'd been living wi', and then it's all up with Dick Halbert and the old tower at Guernsey ; if me and my cub saved our skins it's all we could do ; however there's no use in speaking o' that, he'll never walk out o' the tower no more than he would into the waves out o' this ship, without Dick Halbert's leave, which it stands to reason he can't get. As long as I receive my hunder a year, paid in advance, he'll never stand on green grass again till he's carried out with his feet foremost."

The sailor stopped for a minute, and then continued in a brisk tone,

"If you don't want to see this man, and have another spat wi' him, scoot ; I'm going to feed him first, and take him up for a walk on deck afterwards."

"Take care he does not jump overboard," replied the pretended Tom Holling ; "if he does, you know the bargain ; you are only entitled to a thousand pounds, he has twenty good years' life in him yet, and so a hundred a year will give you double that money ; his lodging costs you nothing, and with your free trade, his food, such as it will be, will not make a great hole in your pocket."

The sailor looked in Tom Holling's face with a queer expression,

"A sorry man you'd be if he did jump overboard.

Whenever I met you for the next twelvemonth I'd expect to see a yard of crape hanging at your hat, but don't you make your reckoning wi' that score in't, he won't jump overboard, or walk out o' this world in any other unfair way as long as he's in Dick Halbert's charge. As you say the money will double itself in twenty years, and he'll neither want for meat, drink or fresh air in the top of my old castle, and none of the three will cost me a King's ransom."

CHAPTER XXIX.

CONSTERNATION.

LADY SYDENHAULT became very uneasy as first, half an hour, and then an hour, passed away without bringing her son to join her at Madame De Salaberry's; at last she could not conceal from her hostess what she felt, and Madame De Salaberry at once offered to send a servant to know what prevented Lord Sydenhault from joining their party.

In half an hour the man returned, accompanied by Lady Sydenhault's own men servants, to say that Lord Sydenhault had set off for Madame De Salaberry's a few minutes after her Ladyship, and that neither carriers nor chair had yet returned to the house.

An hour afterwards the whole inhabitants of the little town of Brest were in a state of consternation at the news, that the English Lord, who for a month back had been spending his money so freely among their poor and needy, was spirited away, no one knew whither. Next morning, at daylight, the little town was all astir; large rewards offered for intelligence of the missing gentleman. The Sedan chair was found on the rocky headland where it had been left the night before, and this was the last trace Lady Sydenhault could obtain of her lost son.

The tall sailor and his companions had disappeared as

if some sudden calamity had swept the whole three from the face of the earth. The landlord of the inn where these men lived, before the disappearance of Lord Sydenhault, produced a carpet bag containing a fine cotton night-shirt and a hair brush with an ivory back. The bag and its contents were shewn to Johnston, who, selecting the brush, brought it to Lady Sydenhault.

On Johnston's entrance, Lady Sydenhault was interrupted in a painful review of the thoughts that had disturbed her mind as she stood for a second or two, in the door-way of the house, before entering the Sedan which was to convey her to Madame De Salaberry's. Her attention had been attracted to the tall sailor by his having placed himself at the corner of the Sedan he was to aid in carrying. He had inadverdently put the lantern on the flat roof of the chair, the light from which fell directly on his head, and the upper part of his person, throwing them into full relief against the dark fir trees of the shrubbery. She caught his eyes fixed with an earnest, searching look upon her face, the expression in them being one which would have awakened thoughts of dread, had she not been surrounded by her own people. It seemed to her then, that the man's figure, with the arms thrown slouchingly forward, and the upper part of his face, as much of it as could be seen under the sailor's hat, were painfully familiar. The memories they awoke were anything but agreeable, and she put them away from her with indignation.

These ideas had all come back with renewed strength, since the disappearance of her beloved son; and, as Johnston shewed her the brush, the conviction forced

itself upon her, that if Arthur had met with foul play, it had been from the hand of his brother.

The police were set on the alert, throughout all France, in England, and in the Channel Islands; a hundred thousand pounds reward was offered for the recovery of Lord Sydenhault; for months, men were dispersed through every part of the country, searching for Lady Sydenhault's eldest son; everything was done that thoughtfulness could suggest, but no intelligence of Lord Sydenhault ever came to gladden his mother's heart.

CHAPTER XXX.

TRACES OF THE STONE.

RUBY is in close attendance on her father's sick bed. Weeks have passed since his first attack of paralysis, and although its evil effects, as far as impeding his speech and motion, have passed away, yet there is no improvement in his health; he still lies, almost motionless, with closed eyes, taking little or no interest in the news that is told him of what is passing in the world.

Ruby sits by his bedside, smoothes his pillow, bathes his fevered hands, or moves, with gentle step, silently about the curtained room, a very angel in her father's sight.

They have only two visitors, both unceasing yet unobtrusive in their attentions; one is Baron Ephriam, who, preceded by Monica, comes many times during the day to the sick chamber, stands for a few minutes leaning over the carved mahogany foot board of the bed, and looks into the sick man's face with a cheery smile, as he gives some little bit of news from the outer world; never talking hopelessly, or condoling with Lord Seymore on his situation, but saying in manner and in word,

"This will all pass away, you will be up and walking about the streets among your fellow-men, to-morrow."

Some days after Ruby's arrival, she is seated by the bedside with her face turned towards that of her sick

father. Baron Ephriam stands in his accustomed place leaning on the footboard. Ruby's fingers are busy with her crochet; her needle falls to the floor, she stoops to pick it up; and, as she bends her head and neck for the purpose, Baron Ephriam sees the antique gold chain of his dream!

Nathan the Seeker is a man endowed with great power of self-restraint, it is the birth-right of every Hebrew, but his blood rushes with sudden impetuosity through his veins, his heart beats with a precious hope, he knows now, as if an angel's hand had written it on the wall, that he is within three feet of the Holy Stone!

His heart grows sick with very happiness, and he seats himself that he may wipe the great drops from his brow, and recover enough physical strength to speak the words of cheering to the sick man.

He knows now where the Stone is; for over a thousand years no Hebrew has ever seen, ever touched the precious relic; for all those centuries it had been carefully, painfully, sought after. As one Seeker died, and found rest in the grave, another was appointed; each man going forth in the strength of his youth, with high hopes, only to return, as the others had done, at the end of a weary pilgrimage through long years spent in vain; with faded face, and thin gray hair, to lie down and sleep the sleep that knows no waking.

Nathan has been "The Seeker" for only twenty years he is still in the strength of his manhood, "his eye is not dim nor his natural force abated." That the angel Raphael had been with him many times and oft, he believes with a firm faith—; he has been aided in making discoveries

during his twenty years of service, which had been sought for in vain, by men older and wiser than he. Had not Eleazer of Corinth, and Aaron of Moscow, both numbered four score years and ten, e'er they laid them down in their last, long, dreamless sleep? and had not they, and every "Seeker," during all the long years of the previous thousand, spent their lives, in journeyings and weariness often, in persecution, pain, and fasting often, and no tidings of the 'Stone' ever came to cheer them on their way? Had not more than one "Seeker" in the last century, gone, in his fiftieth year, to the Rabbi and said "absolve me from mine oath, the 'Stone' will never be found,— it is lost among the Gentiles,— they know it not,— laugh and say, 'there never was such a 'Stone'; it is a myth of the Hebrew?'—While he, had been led as Israel in the wilderness — he could almost see the pillar of fire by night, the cloud by day. They had been "as men who dreamed," while his path had been by "the streams of water in the South," verily Israel's God had blessed him, and he would be blessed.

That antique chain had spoken to him in words of greater power than mortal voice ever spoke.

He rises from his seat; his heart is too full to speak the usual words of cheer to the invalid; with slow and heavy footstep he seeks his own room, that there, in silence and alone, he may pour out his praises to Israel's God, for the high honor to which he hath been called.

As the Hebrew leaves the sick room, the patient exclaims.

"Some sudden illness has come over Baron Ephriam; his face was pale as ashes, and, again, bright as crimson

in a second. I trust nothing serious ails my friend. Of all the men I have ever known, that Hebrew lies closest to my heart."

Edward Penryth is an every day visitor in the sick chamber; he comes with quiet, unobstrusive step and look; bowing to Ruby, nothing more; no stranger could tell that she had ever been more to him than his friend's daughter. He is still the same composed, courtly gentleman, his handsome face and figure showing to greater advantage in the sick room than it ever did in the drawing room at Bayswater. His star is in the ascendant; he comes twice a day, relieving Ruby for an hour of her duties in the sick room, each day bringing piles of the public prints from which he skims the cream for Lord Seymore's amusement, letting him know by reading detached, but pithy sentences, what is doing in the worlds of politics and of science.

Lord Seymore's dream of marrying Ruby to Mr. Penryth has not passed away; nay, his desire, that his offspring should possess the old Sebert lands, is as strong as ever; the wily suitor knows this, and acts upon it. While to Ruby, his utmost attention consists in a courtly bow, or a murmured expression of her name, she no sooner turns to leave the room, however, than he gazes after her retiring form with his eyes full of love inexpressible, being well aware that all the time Lord Seymore's looks are fixed upon his face, drinking in its expression with intense pleasure.

Each day after Edward Penryth's departure, Lord Seymore seems, for an hour or so, visibly better, the

former always taking care to amuse, without tiring the invalid.

Ruby and Monica both notice, and often talk of the effect his presence produces on Lord Seymore, the nurse saying more than once,

"If there is a doctor in London that can cure my master, it is Mr. Penryth."

And Ruby's heart adds, "I have been terribly unjust to that man; I never thought I could like him half so well."

Ruby takes the entire charge of her father's sick room during the day, Monica occupying her place by his bedside at night; in this way the hired nurses are never permitted to have charge of the sick man alone for a single hour.

When Ruby enters the room after Mr. Penryth's departure, her father generally requests her to look over the papers Mr. Penryth has left unfolded; to glance at the births, deaths, marriages, the foreign news, etc.; in case there should be anything there, which she thinks will amuse or interest him.

One morning while thus employed, her eye falls on the words:

"*At Paris, on the fourth instant, of typhoid fever, Herbert Sydney; a young and promising artist; he is believed to be a native of Britain, and leaves his mother at Sydenhault Oaks to deplore the loss of her talented son.*"

The paper swims and whirls before Ruby's eyes as she reads, but no sound escapes her lips. Laying down the paper containing those terrible words,— the words which have withered her heart to ashes, driving out every joy

from her young life in one moment, she rises and with slow steps seeks Monica's room.

Monica is a light sleeper, the movement of the lock as the door is opened awakes her; seeing Ruby by her bedside, her first impression is that her master has become suddenly worse. She utters the words,

"Lord Seymore!"

Ruby replies with forced composure, "He is as usual, but Monica, I feel tired and want rest, could you take my place for the rest of the day?"

"Very willingly," is the reply, "pray go to your room and lie down, ma'am, I will be with my Lord in less than five minutes."

Ruby kneels down by her bed-side, burying her face in her hands. She feels that for her in all the future, whether it is to be long or short, life will be but a weary dream, a longing for a loved one gone, through all the dark midnight, a cry, "would to God it were morning!" And when the morning and the day come in their garish dress, she knows that a like cry will ascend to the foot-stool of her Father: "would to God it were night!"

For her, henceforth, on this earth, there is no future, while her father lives, she prays that God may enable her to care for him, to live in the present, and then—when he goes away, on his journey to the silent land, it may be given her, in mercy, to go also.

Lord Seymore sees and notes, that something in the paper she was reading has troubled his child, and, lifting it up from the bed where she had laid it, he observes and reads the notice of Herbert Sydney's death, reads it twice over.

Lord Seymore is not callous to his daughter's sorrow, but he sincerely rejoices as he reads that the "schoolmaster" will cross his path no more for ever.

He has observed with satisfaction that Ruby's face now evinces none of the aversion it once too plainly shewed, in her intercourse with Edward Penryth, and a feeling akin to joy passes through his soul, as he thinks that the gentleness with which she now greets him, may, with her knowledge of Sydney's death, become a tenderer feeling, and before his death he may see her Edward Penryth's wife.

Weeks are passing by. Ruby's pale, thin face, and heavy, dim eye, tell a tale of heart sickness most pleasing to Mr. Penryth, because they tell him that the notice of Herbert Sydney's death, which was the child of his own imagination, has been read. This sorrow, he believes, will pass away when she becomes his wife, which he has no doubt this clever trick of his, will go far to compass.

Ruby wonders, day by day, why her heart does not break, wonders why amid the wreck and desolation of all its hopes, (her father on his death-bed, Herbert Sydney's bright face below the green grass,) her pulse still beats, her heart lives on.

For a week, Lord Seymore is visibly worse, and, instead of one hour a day, Mr. Penryth asks to be allowed to spend two, three, and even four, beside what (he says to Baron Ephriam in tones which he knows will reach Ruby's ear) must be the death-bed of his dear and honored friend.

Lord Seymore's illness assumes a restless phase; two or three times a day he asks to be lifted from his bed to

a couch placed near the window. This office Mr. Penryth insists on performing for him, and his great height enables him to do so with an ease to the poor patient which the valets in attendance cannot effect.

The invalid's worn, weak voice expresses his gratitude in terms which thrill to the heart of his child.

On one of these occasions, after Mr. Penryth has left Lord Seymore's sick-room, and Ruby takes her place by the sufferer's bed-side, she hears her father say, with closed eyes, when she believes him to be unconscious of her presence,

"With what comfort I could die if my child were the wife of this good man."

The time is passing, and with it the physicians warn Ruby that her father's life is passing also.

On two occasions, he speaks to his daughter on the subject nearest his heart; he says only a few words, but they shew how deeply this old desire, which time or tide cannot obliterate, is rooted in his heart.

And Ruby reasons with herself, "what matters it whether I pass into the silent land as Lord Seymore's daughter or as Edward Penryth's wife. There will be neither marrying nor giving in marriage in that blessed home, we shall know even as we are known, and my dear love will see so truly that Edward Penryth had only this hand of flesh, that my heart never wavered for one moment.

And so, when her father again urged her, with what seemed almost his dying breath, to grant his last desire, she tells him the truth in a few words, and then she adds,"

"If Edward Penryth will have my hand when he hears this, let it be his."

Even while the words are passing her pale lips, she feels as if her life blood were cold water, that by her own words she has sealed her doom, that, for the future, she must shut out the remembrance of Herbert Sydney from her soul, never once to look on those hidden memories again, until the day when she shall clasp his hand, and look into his eyes, and hear him call her by her name in the Eternal Land.

But she will not recall one word she has said; she believes with a simple, child-like faith, that Herbert Sydney hears her words, knows every feeling of her soul, and in his home so far off, yet so near, approves of the sacrifice she is making. And so Ruby Seymore is to be Edward Penryth's wife!

The priest is in his robes. Baron Ephriam stands beside the bridegroom. There are no bridesmaids,—there is no need of such,—the bride is in her ordinary dress, the one she wore yesterday, and the day before, and the golden hair falls in wavy folds on the rich black silk of her costume, while her great lustrous eyes, and her ashen, sunk cheek, speak of death in life!

The Baron Ephriam thinks, as he looks on her sweet sad face, he has never seen anything half so fair or that pained his heart so much; he looks on the bridegroom, who, as far as age goes might be her father; and his mind goes back to the handsome and talented lover who is even now striving so hard to win her, and he denounces in his soul, the conventionalities of life, which demand such a sacrifice.

Monica is in the adjoining apartment, she cannot stand by to see the sacrifice of her darling, and yet she cannot bear to be far off; she must hear the terrible words that consign her best loved to a living death.

The priest is a stranger, yet he knows too surely that it is not sorrow for the man who lies dying there that has worn the beautiful girl's cheek and makes her eye blaze, and he says in his heart, "God forgive me, if in solemnizing His Holy rite of Matrimony I am doing the devil's work!"

And now Edward Penryth is again asked with Ruby by his side,

"Wilt thou have this woman to thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy state of matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honor and keep her in sickness and in health; and forsaking all other, keep thee only unto her, so long as ye both shall live?"

With a strong voice that rings out clear in the silent room, Edward Penryth answers:

"I will."

These two words strick Monica as with an electric shock, she is in the sick room in a moment, on the other side of Lord Seymore's bed, opposite to where the priest, the bridegroom and the bride are standing, close by the dying man; her hands are raised level with her head as she stretches them accross the bed in the direction of Edward Penryth, while, with fierce eyes fixed upon his face, she calls out:

"I forbid this unholy marriage! That man is a married man, and a father!"

Had a shell from some distant battle field fallen in the midst of them, it could not have produced a more startling effect.

"You lie, fiend! mad-woman!" exclaimed Mr. Penryth.

"I do not lie, Mr. Marchmont," replied the woman fiercely, "and you know I do not, but you, are all a lie; you know me well, and remember the three days I lived with you in your wife's house at Jersey, and nursed your daughter, Constance. Your wife, two grown up daughters, and three little boys, can all be brought to attest the truth of what I say; you are more surely Mr. Marchmont than ever you will be Lord Sydenhault."

Each one in the room feels that the woman has told the truth, there is not the shadow of a doubt on the mind of one present.

The young priest with a sigh of thanksgiving, closes his book and puts it under his arm as he moves some paces away from the bed. The Baron Ephriam feels as if a weight of lead had been lifted from his breast.

The sick man, who an hour before could scarcely raise his hand, is sitting up in the bed, and with fierce eye and gesture ordering the enraged bridegroom to leave the house; never to pollute it with his presence more.

The only unmoved face is that of the bride. There is a little touch of color in the cheek as if the blood had begun to flow again, the eye has lost its blaze, but her exterior is calm, and she feels she is saved to be Herbert Sydney's bride in the Spirit land. She knows Monica has told the truth, she remembers the trunk with the brass nails on which she spelled out "Arthur Pen-

ryth," and she knows now that the beautiful pictured face above the quaint mantel piece in the old farm house, is that of his weak brother, Arthur, as he must have appeared in his life's young prime.

And Constance and Amy, with their dark handsome faces, dark eyes and hair, are before her mind's eye, and each face says distinctly, "Edward Penryth is my father!"

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE SPRING TIDE PICTURES.

LORD SEYMORE'S indignation, at the rascally duplicity of his would be son-in-law, seems to have suddenly restored him to almost vigorous health. The thought that Edward Penryth had intended to confer upon his darling Ruby the honour of being his bigamistical wife, sends the sluggish blood of yesterday coursing with lightning speed through his veins to-day. His recovery seems more the work of magic than anything else, it does not take him more days to get well, than it took weeks to drain his strength, sap the vigor from his blood, and lay him on what every one, save Baron Ephriam, believed to be his deathbed.

One day, he is sitting in his chair by the fire, another by the open window, another day or two, and he is pacing with almost sturdy steps to and fro in his apartment. His physicians advise change of air and scene, bid him visit France and Germany, make a short tour, and return to pass the winter by his own fireside.

Two or three weeks after the signal exposure which Monica had made of the perfidy of Edward Penryth, Lord Seymore is spending the evening before his departure in his library. Ruby is there also, with the sad, quiet face she always wears now, she is to accompany him on his tour

to the continent, and she sits, with folded hands, thinking on the subject that is never absent from her thoughts.

Baron Ephriam enters, carrying a portfolio; he greets his friend in his usual hearty tone of voice, "You will be gone to-morrow; I wish I could go also. I have brought you engravings of Sydney's last pictures, they are said to be his best, they are two he has added to the series of 'The Spring Tide.'"

Ruby's heart is stirred with a strange feeling. Baron Ephriam had, many weeks ago, long before she read the notice of Herbert Sydney's death, taught her who the painter of "The Spring Tide" pictures was, and her heart beats uneasily to hear the man who used to talk of Herbert Sydney as if he were a beloved son or younger brother, now, that he lies cold and silent in the earth, speak in the old jovial strain with not even a subdued accent in his voice.

"These pictures have both been sold," continued he, "for larger prices than the seven others. He tells me he has realized twenty thousand pounds by the sale of each of them, but he does not say who the purchasers are; I have taken it into my head it is Barnum the showman; if so, he will make his money out of them; when I was in New York, Barnum was vowing vengeance against his own stupidity in letting the others slip through his fingers."

"Poor fellow," said Lord Seymore, (he could afford to praise the 'School-master,' now that he believed him to be in the other world,) "he would, no doubt, have built himself up a collosal fame and fortune both, had he lived."

"Had he lived! What do you mean?" inquired the Baron with a queer smile, as he raised his head from the table, where he was endeavoring to make the engravings lie flat.

"I mean," replied Lord Seymore, "that it is a pity Sydney the painter died so young."

"Died!" said the Baron with a smiling face, "what has put that in your head? If he is dead it is within the last hour. I had a telegram from him this morning."

Baron Ephriam gave one glance in the direction where Ruby sat; her hands were folded in her lap, and she trembled, as if with an ague fit.

"I saw his death in the "Times" three weeks ago," replied Lord Seymore, and, ringing for his servant, desired him to look over the "deaths" in the "Times" for the last few weeks, and bring him the paper that contained the notice of Herbert Sydney the artist's death.

A paper was brought. The Baron Ephriam looked at it,

"Who could have done this? These things are poor jokes; in any case I hope his mother did not see it, and have the heart-ache for a week in consequence. One good thing, Mr. Sydney is very regular in his habits of correspondence, and never allows a post to pass without letting her hear that he is alive and well, and making more money than he knows what to do with."

Baron Ephriam stole another glance at Ruby's face; her cheek had a rose tint now, she was more like the original of "The Spring Tide" pictures than he had seen her for many a long day.

The Baron came on the morrow to bid good-bye to

Lord Seymore and his daughter, to give them introductions which would be of use to them in their journey, and to bid them God-speed.

The carriage was at the door, Ruby's hat on, her shawl folded over her arm, the Baron dressed with his overcoat, all in readiness to depart.

"I am late," said the Baron Ephriam, "and I am sorry for it, because I shall be obliged to trespass on your good nature, and apologize to Miss Seymore for detaining you five minutes; there is a puzzle in one of my records which I know you can solve for me by looking at it, can you spare the time?"

"Certainly, with all pleasure," replied Lord Seymore, and with a few words of apology to Miss Seymore, the two gentlemen left the room.

The records were on the table, Lord Seymore sat down with composure, to look over the difficulty, and point out to the Baron Ephriam what he was to do.

Just as Lord Seymore began his task, the Hebrew went to the room door, opened it, spoke a few words to an imaginary person in the lobby, and, turning towards his guest, saying as he did so, in a hurried voice: "Excuse me for one moment, Lord Seymore." was gone from the room, shutting the door as he went out. In a second he was in Lord Seymore's apartment where they had just left Ruby; apologizing for his intrusion, and taking a book from the table which he had left there a few minutes before, he produced a note, handing it to Ruby with the same coolness, as if it were or' invitation to some evening party, said "I think nat

is for you, Miss Seymore, it got mixed up in my papers somehow."

While her murmured "Thank you" rang in his ear, he was gone, already standing beside his friend, and listening to a prolix account of what was to be done with a deed that he knew far better how to manage than the one who supposed he was doing the Hebrew a favor.

Ruby knew well the hand that wrote the address on the little note delivered by the Baron, and hurrying to her own apartment, locked it as she entered, that she might read the words written there, in silence, and alone.

There were but a few lines, but they were sufficient, all she wished to know, all she cared to hear, and she knelt by her bedside, burying her sobbing face in the pillows, while her heart went up in thankfulness to her Heavenly Father 'who hath mercy ever.'

As she drove along in the carriage, half an hour afterwards, by her father's side, the sky seemed bluer than it had ever been before, the autumn tints of tree and flower richer and more varied than they had ever appeared in all her life long; the very insects chirruped and sang with greater happiness; all the earth was full of joy for Ruby.

CHAPTER XXXII.

MISTRESS MONICA'S LETTER.

DURING the rest of the day, in which Monica had made the discovery that Edward Penryth was the husband of Mrs. Marchmont she felt ill at ease; felt that she had a solemn duty to perform, she knew that Mrs. Marchmont, had been married to Edward Penryth, in the church of the parish where her father and mother dwelt, up among the Jersey hills. At the time Miss Seymore went to spend a week there, Monica went also; she had been in the very church where the marriage had taken place, seen the priest who performed the ceremony; she could yet look back, in her memory, to the very spot at the altar rails, pointed out as the place where the bride and bridegroom had knelt.

In that quiet farm house, where incidents other than the usual occupations of the day were rare, each little occurence was treasured and talked over, in fact, became an episode in the lives, not only of Monsieur and Madame Bellfeuille, but also of all their dependants.

Monsieur Bellfeuille owned the land he tilled, and the cottagers around who paid rent to him, looked upon the farmer as a great seigneur, and considered the gaunt-looking old farm house with its many gables, as a stately family mansion; hence such an event as the marriage of the proprietor's daughter was one that would live in all their memories.

Monica knew that with a husband whose reputed wealth was great even in rich England, Mrs. Marchmont's means were so scanty, that had it not been for the help she received from the old farm house, she would have had to deny her children the few and simple pleasures afforded them.

During that long restless day, Monica asked herself many times, "What is my duty? Will it not be a sin for me to conceal from Mrs. Marchmont the real name and position of her husband? If I should hear a month hence that Mr. Penryth has married some other noble lady, what will be my share in that transaction?"

She could not ask counsel of Ruby in this emergency, as she was wont to do. "No," said she to herself, "I will not allow my darling to soil her hands by any interference in this man's foul transactions. God who made me the means of saving her from Mr. Penryth, will help me to do what is best. I will pray to God, He will put thoughts into my heart, and words into my mouth."

Monica was helped; ere the night closed she had written a long letter to Mrs. Marchmont, which, in due time, found its way to the little home in the quiet Jersey village.

It was with feelings of horror that Mrs. Marchmont read the words which told her that her husband was no poor officer in the Preventive service, but the son of an English Countess, a man of large wealth, who, but for the knowledge of his voice and person obtained by Monica while in attendance on her daughter, would now be the husband of the beautiful Miss Seymore they all loved so well.

Mrs. Marchmont, after reading the first few lines, carried the letter to her own room, and, locking the door, sat down, that she might there read, and re-read, this wonderous epistle.

When Monica wrote the letter, she was aware she was telling a story entirely out of the common run of events, telling Mrs. Marchmont that while making and mending her children's clothes, teaching them to spell and to read, going on in her simple round of everyday duties in that poor uncarpeted home, she was the wife of one whose mother counted her income by thousands, while she feared, to spend a few shillings on anything but the barest necessaries! Monica had seen the difficult task which lay before her, and in her simple way she had given so minute a description of all she knew concerning Mr. Penryth, that this very circumstance gave to her letter the stamp of truth.

She told Mrs. Marchmont that Miss Seymore was the daughter of Lord Seymore, that a year previous, Miss Seymore had been asked in marriage by Mr. Penryth, and that the marriage had been suddenly put a stop to. She accounted for her own ignorance of Mr. Marchmont and Mr. Penryth being the same person, when she saw him in Mrs. Marchmont's home, by the fact, that when he was paying his addresses to Miss Seymore, she had never seen him. The only room in the house fronting the lawn which her duties called upon her to enter, being Miss Seymore's, the windows of which opened into a conservatory made and kept expressly for Miss Seymore's own use, a place Mr. Penryth had never entered. Hence, she had no opportunity of seeing the noble bride-

groom, unless her feelings had dictated to her to seek such, which they did not.

Mrs. Marchmont sat, until far into the night, in her own chamber, with barred door, reading, re-reading and thinking over this letter with its astounding news. It did not come upon her unexpectedly, Mr. Marchmont's manners and appearance, his clothes, his very hands, softer and whiter than her own, had told her he was a man whose position was other than he professed it to be; she had long suspected he was not what he seemed, that he was a man of easy, if not of affluent means, instead of one to whom every pound was of value, and only to be laid out in bare necessaries, as he assured her was the case.

When the soft light of the autumn morning was breaking the darkness outside, and paling the light of the candle by which she had so often read the letter in her hand, Mrs. Marchmont still sat on the low seat by her bedside. She had come to the resolution of not imparting the tidings she had received to anyone, but to wait, trusting in her Heavenly Father, who alone could help her in this dilemma; she felt sure the time was not far distant when her husband would come to change their present life in one way or another; and she resolved that she would not, merely to relieve the pressure on her own soul, say anything to her children which could lessen the little love they had for their father; she would bear the burden alone, it would not be for long, she would try to do God's bidding, and as she had been do-

ing for years past, endeavor in her 'patience to possess her soul.'

On leaving Lord Seymore's sick-room, Edward Penryth scarcely gave himself time for thought; he hailed a cab, sprang in and ordered the man to drive quickly to the South Eastern Railway station; arrived there, he took a ticket for Southampton, and it was while being whirled along in the train that he first permitted himself to think over the events of the morning.

He recollected perfectly having seen Monica in his daughter's apartment, and having questioned her as to whether she came from St. Helier; he was convinced she had deceived him, that she was an English sick-nurse who had probably accompanied some invalid to Jersey, and that his wife in paying a visit to St. Helier (a thing he had strictly forbidden), had picked her up and brought her to the village to relieve herself of the irksome task of attending to her sick daughter.

He was not long in concocting a plan, by adopting which, he hoped to convince Lord Seymore that the sick-nurse was mistaken in her belief that the Mr. Marchmont she had seen, and Mr. Penryth were the same person. He determined to get his wife and children removed from Jersey with all speed.

Where to send them, he had not quite made up his mind, it was a matter of small consequence, provided they were far enough off, buried in some out of the way place where they would never hear an English word; one of the French Colonies suggested itself to him; this could easily be managed, meantime he would bring them

to the main land, preparatory to going to their destination, wherever it might be. This effected, he would return to the village, with his carriage and servants, dressed in a costume very different to that he had worn on his former visits, and going to the Bailli and priest, neither of whom he had ever seen, would promise them a handsome sum for a certificate from each, to the effect that he and Mr. Marchmont were not the same person, although a striking likeness existed between them; that Mr. Penryth was a younger and a darker man than Mr. Marchmont.

Upon these documents, and an earnestly expressed desire on the part of Mr. Penryth that Lord Seymore would appoint some one to accompany him to the Jersey village, so that they might themselves judge of the truth of his story he depended for reinstating himself in Lord Seymore's good opinion. His having found out the village where the Marchmont's lived, (the name not having been mentioned by Monica), he would account for, by saying he had gone from one village to another, until he had found out where these people had lived; unfortunately they were now gone, and no one could tell whither; otherwise, he would have brought the true Mr. Marchmont with him, as the best and simplest way of proving his story the true one.

Edward Penryth had travelled so quickly, that Monica's letter had only preceded him by a few hours; after her night of watching and weeping, his wife had barely time to refresh herself by bathing her head and face, and changing her clothes, ere she was confronted by her husband. She saw at a glance that his temper, always

irritable, was at the present moment excited in the highest degree, and the poor woman absolutely quailed beneath the eye of the man who had wronged her so deeply.

"Well, madam," were the first words he uttered, on entering his wife's apartment, as he threw himself into the chair in which she had passed the night; "you have done for yourself as well as for me now; how will you like, you who could not live on two hundred a year without grumbling, to go to one of the French Colonies, and help to earn the bread yourself and children eat?"

Mrs. Marchmont stared in unfeigned astonishment, his words were so different from what she imagined they would have been, she fancied that he had come to try to excuse himself, forgetting that he was entirely ignorant of her knowledge of the facts with which Monica's letter had acquainted her.

"I do not understand you, explain yourself," said she, with as much calmness as she could assume.

"I will do so," still in the same fierce angry tone. "Do you recollect when we first married that I told you what I have continued to impress upon you, with, alas! very little effect; that you must on no account visit St. Helier, or associate with any of the English people there." He stopped to take breath, and Mrs. Marchmont attempted to answer him, which he prevented alike by eye and finger, raising the latter pointedly. "Excuse me, madam, I shall finish what I have to relate before troubling you again to repeat the falsehoods which you told me when I was last here."

Mrs. Marchmont's face bore evidence to the burning indignation which this accusation gave rise to in her

heart, but compressing her lips she raised her eyes to his face, as if by so doing, the truth there expressed would make him ashamed of the injustice of his accusation. "I shall now" continued he, in the same bitter tone as before, "explain to you, my motive for requiring what it would appear, is a great sacrifice on your part; my situation is one that has never been held by a married man, and I knew that the day I was discovered to be such, would leave me penniless. By your disobedience I have been turned out of my situation, the sick nurse whom you employed for your daughter Constance has given information to the authorities that I am a married man; the consequence is, all that is now left us, is to go to a Colony where we can work hard for our daily bread. Make your arrangements as quickly as possible; this morning I shall sell those trumpery pieces of furniture, and to-night we shall all depart for the main land."

Mrs. Marchmont was so overwhelmed with astonishment, that, for some moments, she sat on the seat she had taken opposite her husband, cogitating with herself which could be the truth, his story, or Monica's.

At last, however, she determined she would take what appeared the plainest course, by at once shewing him the letter, the perusal of which had caused her so much pain during the past night. In taking it from the table on which it lay, she said, in a dignified manner, very different from her usual tone in addressing her husband whom she really feared. "Mr. Marchmont or Mr. Penryth whichever you are, pray read that letter."

The words fell on his ear as if they had been scathing

lightning, the secret he thought impossible for her ever to arrive at, was in her possession, he was hemmed in on every side, and his hand shook as he took the letter from hers. His wife sat gazing in his face as he read, and re-read Monica's words; he saw then, that the woman who had confronted him beside Lord Seymore's bed was an old and attached domestic, and from her letter, it was clear, that not only she, but Miss Seymore also, knew his wife and family.

"Who is the writer of this letter?" asked he, more for the purpose of eliciting other information than that which he asked for, and also to give him time to arrange his scattered thoughts.

"The attendant who accompanied Miss Seymore, the daughter of Lord Seymore, to Jersey, when she lived at Madame Dupont's."

"What brought Miss Seymore to Madame Dupont's?"

"I cannot tell, most likely the same motive that brings other ladies of her rank, to do good by helping to educate these poor orphans."

"Are you acquainted with Miss Seymore?"

"Yes, during the past year she has never been a week without passing several hours in my house, she instructed Amy and Constance in English, and in music, and she has invited them both, to visit her at her father's house in London."

Here was a revelation; his wife he could easily manage, but Constance, with the determination of character she inherited from himself, her ability to express herself on paper, her knowledge of Miss Seymore's address, how was he to manage Constance? He must see her at once,

find out if they had corresponded, and how much she knew.

It was just possible Miss Seymore might have written to Constance an account of the startling interview which put a stop for the second time to a marriage between herself and the girl's father.

This was only the thought of a moment, and was discarded at once; yet it troubled his already over-excited brain. He had eaten nothing since he left London, but he had drunk plentifully of brandy and water, which he had never indulged in before to the same extent; it seemed absolutely needed to give him strength of body, and enable him to arrange and re-arrange his thoughts, as he had been trying to do ever since he left town, with only snatches of sleep, from which he would start with Monica's words ringing in his ear, "That man is a married man and a father!"

"Where is Constance? Bring her here, I wish to speak to her," he said in a quick way, quite at variance with his usual mode of speaking.

"Constance has not left her room," replied Mrs. Marchmont, speaking with a composure she did not feel, and which seemed to excite her husband in a most extraordinary degree.

"Not left her room!" exclaimed he. "Do you sleep all day here? Bring her to me instantly, if she is not here within five minutes I will know why."

He rose to his feet with a look which seemed more the fierce glare of a demon, than that of a human being. Mrs. Marchmont hesitated, she almost felt as if she were in the room with a madman, and would be bring-

ing her child into dangerous proximity with one who was unaccountable for his actions ; she knew Constance's temper, that she would not try to conciliate her father, or calm down his anger, as she herself would ; and for a moment she stood irresolute.

Edward Penryth pulled his watch from his pocket, exclaiming in a voice of thunder which echoed through the quiet dwelling amid the hush and silence of the early morning. "If the girl is not here within the time I mentioned, you and she, shall both have cause to wish she had never been born, if I should be hanged for it."

As the last words left his lips, the word "fool" seemed to be thundered in his ears, his body to be swayed backwards and forwards by some irresistible power, he was impelled against his will to look up in full expectation of seeing the demon of his mother's drawing-room above his head, he felt as if the floor beneath his feet had suddenly given way, the interview of the morning had long been a thing of the past, his brother and his child were in some unaccountable way mixed up with the demon which he believed he saw, above his head — the claws, he felt in his hair — A great cry escaped his lips which, without words, went up to the ear of the Most High as the same cry did six thousand years ago, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Edward Penryth fell on his face to the ground, and when his wife tried to raise him she could only move his head enough to see that his face was swollen and purple, white foam issuing from his lips, as it were the foam of the salt sea waves.



THE TOWER.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

ALAS FOR THE CONQUEROR KING!

LORD SEYMORE and his daughter are travelling in their own carriage, attended by Monica and a couple of men servants.

His fortune is not such as by any means to warrant an expenditure of this kind, but he has just recovered from a long and dangerous illness, one in which he has been treading on the borders of the Land of the Shadow, and his physicians have warned him that while change of air and scene are necessary to his complete restoration, he must be surrounded, as much as possible, by his own servants, and the comforts to which he has been accustomed all his life in his English home.

They take their journey by easy stages; through Southampton Water, past the Isle of Wight, to Havre, where they take the train for Paris; stopping long enough to rest at Humiere's. Passed Elbeuf, on and on, through Liseux, to Caen, where they remain for a day or two, that they may inspect with care the place where every spot is historical ground; tread the earth which was trodden so many centuries ago by William the Conqueror.

Alas! alas! We can only look at the place of his interment. With the exception of a very doubtful hip bone, the ashes of William have been scattered to the four winds of Heaven. Although the names of William and

Matilda are as familiar as household words to every peasant here, not a single memorial of them remains, except the citadel and churches which they built. It is the same everywhere in Normandy, — even at Falaise, where the Conqueror was born, and at Rouen where he died.

That story is the saddest of all the glory stories on record, and thinking over it we wonder to ourselves, and say, "Can this be veritable history?"—

Yes, the truest of all true histories, the life and death of a man set above his fellows, who longed to be glorified — not loved. The meanest Norman peasant lived a happier life, died a more peaceful death, and most surely was buried where his ashes were allowed to remain in quiet, and fulfil the mandate "dust to dust."

The eyes of William were closed by menials, who, dividing his wardrobe and other portables among them, abandoned the unburied corpse! In this, only imitating the example of his friends and family who forsook him ere he had ceased to breathe, while his eyes were yet capable of noting each retreating form as it left his bedside. A peasant took pity on the dead body of the forsaken king, and with a few others of his own class conveyed it to Caen for burial.

As the scanty, poor procession approached the city, a fire broke out, and the terrified bearers laid down the king's body and fled. It seemed as if this last miserable honor was interdicted. Worse still, on the way to the grave, the peasants having rallied a second time, and borne the body to the church, the form of a funeral service was gone through, with as much show of ceremony

as was possible under the circumstances, but when the Bishop called upon the people to pray for the soul of the deceased, a citizen sprang up, and with loud threats protested against the interment. His father's house had stood upon that spot, and had been seized by William, and its inmates driven homeless and desolate into the streets.

For this wrong, the citizen demanded restoration of the ground as the property of himself, in right of his family, and refused to let the funeral obsequies proceed.

The justice of the demand was supported by the unanimous voice of the people; and the priests, after vainly remonstrating against the interruption, were compelled to compromise the matter by purchasing from the citizen the little space of earth in which the remains of the king were about to be laid.

The burial service was suspended, while the price of the king's grave was debated, and the coin paid over to the owner in the nave of the Church.

This obstruction removed; all was now ready for the last sad office, but a fatality still followed the corpse, the peasants said that the curses of torn and bleeding hearts were around it, and so indeed it seemed to be. As the coffin was swung down into the grave it struck against the side of the pit, was broken open by the shock, and flung its swollen contents violently to the bottom where the corpse burst. The effluvium which instantly filled the Church, was so over powering that the people rushed out in all directions; even the Priest fled, and the last sad rites accorded to every poor man, were for the King and Conqueror left unfinished. The earth was hastily

hurled over the body, and there it lay unmolested for nearly five centuries, when the Hugenots who had heard that treasures of great value had been buried with it, tore up the grave, and finding nothing but the bones, collected them in a piece of cloth and scattered them about the Church, completing the desecration by destroying the very grave stone.

The relics were afterwards stealthily gathered, and placed for safe custody in the hands of a monk, who kept them carefully in his cell in hopes of finding an opportunity of restoring them in secret to the rifled grave. But it never came. The same malignant Spirit still pursued the bones as he had done the corpse nearly five centuries before.

The town was sacked, the monks expelled, and the bones dispersed to the four winds of Heaven for the last time. And all that now remains of William the Conqueror is a hip bone which was bought from the insurgents and deposited under his monument. Yet, this King was a most liberal benefactor to the town; and these indignities cast upon his remains were done in the very face of those noble structures built by his munificence.

The founder of the Churches of St. Etienne and of the Trinity was surely entitled to the poor reward of being spared insult in his tomb.

These churches are almost miracles of mediaeval art, and while standing amid the repose of their nave and aisle, the grandeur of the conception gains gradually upon the mind, filling it with feelings of profound awe. The recessed pillars, the groined roofs, the colonnaded

naves, the vastness and elevation, are elements of a magnificence expressly characteristic of the highest forms of Norman architecture.

They have seen all they wish to see in Caen., Lord Seymore instead of feeling weary with the journey, is refreshed and strengthened, and Ruby with Herbert Sydney's note lying next her bosom, is getting back her rose leaf color and dimpled cheek. They now take their way along the seductive heights of Vire, look at the beautiful scenery and Cathedral of Avranches, and pass through the Valley of the Fountain. They meet several English families in Brest, where, to their great surprise, they are told the story of the abduction of Lord Sydenhault, which fills Lord Seymore with hearty sympathy for his old friend the Countess, and shock them both by the surmises, coming through the servants, who, after all was over, seem suddenly to have found out a striking resemblance between the bearded face of the tall English sailor, and the brother of the stolen man. That brother whose interest it manifestly is, that Lord Sydenhault should remain in the old dreamy state in which he had lived for nearly a score of years, or else disappear entirely from human ken.

The next resting place is in Brittany, where in the Cote-du-Nord, it is not the Breton peasant alone who has an indomitable horror of modern notions, airs of fine breeding, etiquette, taste and manners of the towns; but the country gentlemen speak little else than the patois of the Breton, and attend the Session of the States at Rennes in the dress of peasants, in sabots (wooden shoes), with swords by their sides.

Piety towards the dead is a sentiment common to all primitive communities, but the Bretons carry it to an excess of romantic tenderness, and it is with feelings of great wonder that, in wandering about the Churches and graveyards, Ruby and her father listen to the peasants, who tell them (in full faith that they speak the truth), that their friends and relatives lie in the graves around, conscious of their locality, like sentient creatures listening to high mass, and the supplications of their friends!

"The souls of our fathers dwell here," say they, "we would not have them buried far away in the cemetery, where they could no longer hear the chants of the service, or our prayers as we make intercession for them; we love to have them near us, to feel that they know when we pass by, when we talk of them, and strew flowers on their graves. This is their home, we can see their quiet resting places from our windows, whether the sun shines, or the wind blows, and we can send our children to pray beside them in the quiet twilight."

The Breton has several habits and customs in common with the Scottish Highlander. The poor Breton, or the poor Highlander, may have barely bread for himself, but the utmost hospitality prevails; in either land, the traveller approaches the wide open door, assured of a hearty welcome, and a share of the fare the house contains, however poor and scanty that fare may be.

The sight of a stranger is always looked on with interest, the poor man treated as bounteously as the richest, and none more joyously hailed than the wandering beggar; the latter indeed brings an amount of gossip which always borders on the marvellous, and which the Breton

peasant repeats with a simple faith in its truth, which seems almost incredible to those who have mixed more freely with the world.

There are narratives of the intercourse held between the living and the dead, which obtain a credence from both priest and people in Brittany, that elsewhere would be looked on as the vagaries of a disordered imagination.

The weather was getting cold, it was late in the year, the atmosphere seemed to predict a severe winter. To see the Cathedral at Strasburg, and to visit the clock makers of the Black Forest in their own homes, had been an expressed wish with Ruby before she left London; and in order to indulge this wish, her father transferred his daughter, himself, his carriage and his servants to the railway.

On their arrival at Strasburg, their first visit was of course to the Cathedral; very few English venture inside, they content themselves with looking up at the tower; while the Germans, French and Americans not only go into the Cathedral, but make the ascent to the upper spire.

This Ruby was determined to do, and was amply rewarded by the picture it disclosed to her of dusky roofs set in a ring of rivers, woods and mountains; where the Rhine and the Ill which run about the town in all directions, the Black Forest, and the Vosges a little further off, seemed mapped out at her feet.

They also paid a visit to the Church of St. Thomas for the purpose of inspecting the bodies of a certain Count of Saarbruck and his daughter here shown in a state of wonderful preservation, the most astonishing

part of the marvel being not that the flesh, which is embalmed, should have been so well preserved, but that the clothes also should be in good condition, and almost fresh, after the lapse of four hundred years!

They saw the Count lying in the dress which he had worn while living four hundred years before. By his side lay the body of his daughter, high heeled shoes on the feet, bracelets of pearl on the wrists, and rings on the fingers.

The second day after their arrival in Strasburg, snow began to fall with unusual severity, not in the large, heavy flakes which melt away as they come down, but in small, crisp particles which told of hard frost in the regions whence they came, and cold on the earth where they fell, which would probably keep them undisturbed for many weeks.

"I fear we shall have to turn here, and go home without seeing my Black Forest village," said Ruby, addressing her father, as she stood looking out on the waste of snow which everywhere formed a white covering for street, palisade, roofs of houses, porches, in short, wherever it could obtain an inch of space to rest upon. The trees lost their bareness, covered as they were with the feathery foliage.

"Nay," said the Baron, "if the snow does not stop in a day or two, we will go on, that is you and I, leaving the servants here, and after making our visit to the Black Forest, return and pick them up on our homeward way."

Ruby was delighted with this proposition; she knew that her father was now well and strong, that it would

do him no harm to travel without his attendants, and she herself had self-reliance enough to dispense with Monica's services.

From daybreak till night, and from night untill dawn again, the snow fell without intermission; it seemed as if the windows of Heaven were opened, and the snow storm never to cease.

Their arrangements were made, a sleigh and driver procured, the first night bringing them close to the borders of the Black Forest. The day was by no means cold for the season, and although the snow was several feet deep along the roads, the air was bright and clear overhead, not a breath of wind stirring. Both Ruby and her father felt the genial influence of the clear, frosty air infusing, as it were, new health and life into their veins, while the rapid rate at which the sleigh sped over the frozen snow gave a sensation to both as new as it was exciting.

"If travelling on the Continent in winter," said Ruby, "is always like this, I should prefer it to any other mode of travelling I have ever known."

"And I also," replied her father. "Much as I enjoyed our short easy days journeys in France, this sleigh driving certainly beats it. If we get on as pleasantly as this for another week, I shall write instructious to Roger to take back the carriage, and send Monica and Jones on to join us."

The next day and the next were passed in an equally pleasant manner, visiting little villages on the borders of the forest. Their journey on the third was to be rather

a long one. The latter part consisted of one long stage of thirteen miles. This lay for the most part through the forest, and Ruby anticipated more than usual pleasure from the new scenery by which she would be surrounded.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CHASED BY WOLVES.

A LITTLE inn on the borders of the forest was the place appointed for their mid-day meal; and here the driver came to inform them that as the relay of horses they had expected for a change, had not arrived, they would be obliged to wait for a few hours in order to rest and refresh those he had; adding, "The delay will be of little consequence, as the moon rises early, to-night it is at its full; with the snow the forest will be as bright as day."

"If you say so," replied Lord Seymore, "I think we should prefer the moonlight drive you propose. It will be something to say when we return home," added he, turning to Ruby, "that we have had a long drive, over the snow, in the Black Forest by moonlight,"

"I should enjoy it of all things; the moon makes everything look so beautiful, throws a dark shadow here, a bright gleam there, making even an ordinary park at home, with a few trees, seem like fairy-land; it will be like double fairy-land in the Black Forest with its gigantic trees in their snowy dress."

"It is settled then, we shall go," replied Lord Seymore, turning to the man, "only take care you have plenty of warm rugs to wrap round us."

"Yes, sir, everything of that kind is already in the sleigh, and as good as Strasburg can furnish."

It was all settled, they were to start at six o'clock, as the moon rose.

At the hour appointed the sleigh was at the door, their driver on the box; Lord Seymore had already paid his bill to the son of the landlord, and was about to hand Ruby into the sleigh, when the owner of the inn came himself quickly to the door, saying:

"You do not mean to go far to-night, sir? You will return and sleep here?"

"No, we shall not return, it is my intention to go as far as the next stopping place, and there sleep."

"Surely Monsieur does not know what he is saying," replied the man, partly addressing Lord Seymore and partly his wife and several others who had crowded into the open doorway; "Monsieur is not aware that the wolves are abroad, and have been so for the last two nights."

"What is that you say?" asked Lord Seymore. "The wolves abroad! I scarcely understand your meaning."

"I mean," replied the landlord, "that the wolves are out in large numbers, that they have been heard in the Black Forest for the last two nights, and that if you attempt going there now, you may all be torn to pieces before midnight."

"Do you hear that?" said Lord Seymore, addressing the driver, "can this be the case?"

The man looked at Lord Seymore with an incredulous smile,

"If the wolves are so rife as that in the Black Forest,

it will be one of the wonders of the world; who ever heard of wolves forming themselves into packs at this season of the year? There are lots of small game around for them to feed on; besides the snow has only been falling for a week; it is a nonsensical tale; the man wishes you to remain for another night at his house; the English pay well, Jacques is afraid these are the last thalers he will gain so easily this year. The French and Germans know better how to take care of their money than to give him every franc he puts in his bill."

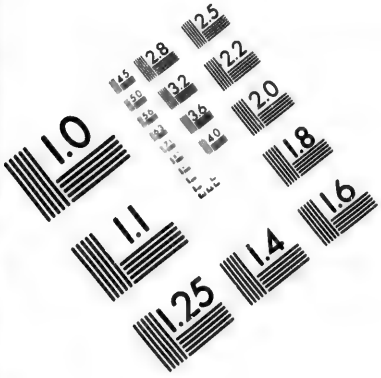
"Then you really think there is no fear?" said Lord Seymore, who now recollected having heard while at Strasburg of the devices which inn-keepers frequently practised to make their guests remain with them longer than was necessary; the tales of wolves being a fertile source of working upon the fears of travellers, making them at times remain for weeks, and thus enriching their own purses at the expense and to the ennui of their guests.

"Yes, a great deal of fear," put in the landlord ere the driver could reply, "the snow has been on the ground for three weeks here, whatever it may have been at Strasburg, and besides, it is going to be a desperate cold night, by ten o'clock a white frost will fall, and you will have the wolves too. You can go, but I warn you."

The driver laughed aloud.

"The air is as mild as a day in September, and you tell me a white frost will fall by night. You are a true weather prophet forsooth, if your tales of the wolves are as false as your prognostications of the weather, there will be none in the Black Forest this year."





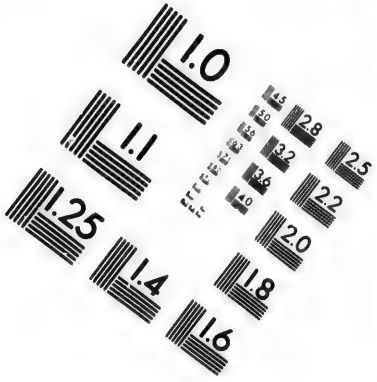
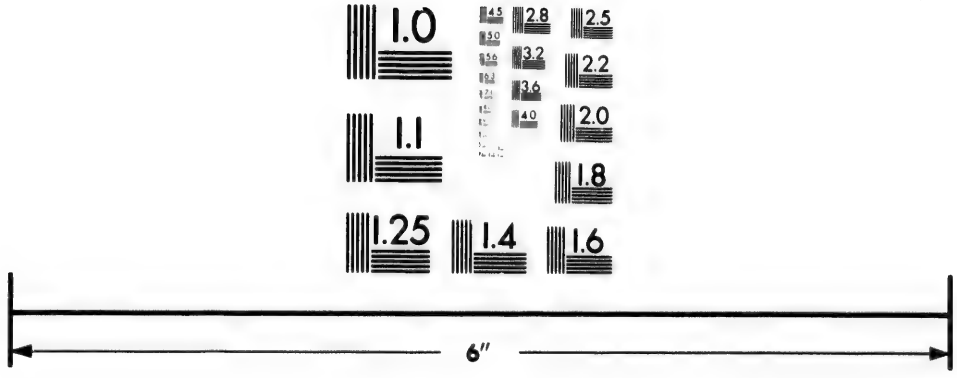
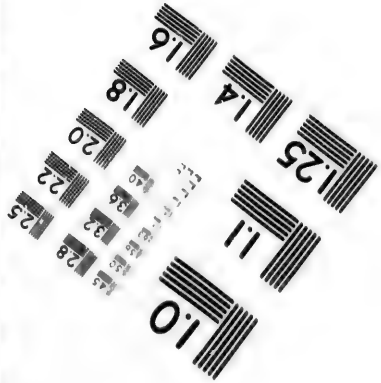
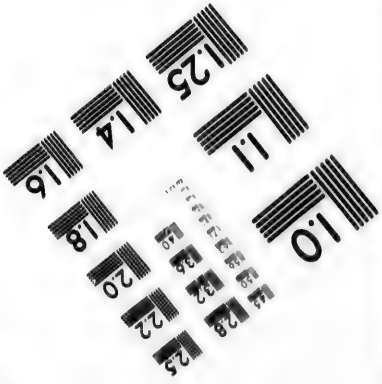


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"A white frost will fall by ten o'clock, I tell you," said the landlord, who was now very much excited by having his knowledge of the signs of the sky doubted; he being considered a sort of living barometer by the peasants around him. Having his prophetic power called in question was more than his temper could stand; "go, you will repent it when you lose your horses and perhaps yourself."

"There is not the least fear, I can assure you," replied the driver, totally disregarding the landlord, and addressing himself to Lord Seymore, "you see yourself the weather is finer than when we left Strasburg; I never saw a clearer sky."

"It is too clear," observed a bystander.

"And as to the wolves," continued the driver, taking no notice of what the peasant said, "that is simply nonsense. I have been driving all my life, and never heard of wolves so early in the year before."

"The wolves have been heard these two nights though," said the man who had before spoken.

The driver and Lord Seymore both noticed what the man said, each coming to the conclusion in his own mind that he was some one in the interest of the landlord, or at all events, one who wished to please that important personage.

"I am willing to risk myself and my horses," said the driver; "if I were not pretty sure we should see neither the wolves nor a white frost, I would not do so."

"Then," said the Baron, "I think we had better go." Ruby was handed into the sleigh, the Baron followed, the rugs were tucked comfortably around them, and in

a few minutes they were out of sight of the little inn. The landlord, as they were driving off, was still standing in the doorway, talking to a few of the peasants who were resting after their day's work. One of them remarked that he himself had heard the wolves the night before, but the others shrugged their shoulders and smiled with an air of incredulity, remarking dryly, that "if so, the brutes have come in good time this year."

On the travellers went, the moon rising higher, and its light becoming brighter as they sped along; they passed several châlets from which they could hear the peasants' voices as they joined together and were raised in song, from one of which, the last they passed, 'Mein Faterland,' sung by deep male voices, with one female voice, whose clear notes took the solo part, ringing in their ears with sweet cadence after they had left the châlet in the distance, out of sight.

They had been driving more than two hours when the path became heavy and much impeded by the untrodden snow; the horses proceeding at less than half their ordinary pace. Lord Seymore remarked this, and spoke of it to the driver, saying, that he hoped their journey would not continue at this slow rate.

"No," said the man, "but there are about four miles just here which lie low, and the first snow is always heavy to get through, my horses too are more tired than fresh ones would have been."

"If that is all," replied Lord Seymore, "we must make up our minds to be a little longer on the road, which I suppose is all the inconvenience will amount to."

"That is it," replied the man; "I'm surprised to find

the snow so heavy here, old Jacques must have been telling the truth when he said it had been falling for three weeks."

"I suppose so," replied Lord Seymore, and here the conversation dropped for the time, the guide giving all his attention to his horses, whom he seemed to be more than usually anxious to encourage in using their strength; while Lord Seymore pointed out, now and again, as an opening occurred among the trees shewing a gorge or gully in the forest, all the beauty with which the different lights on the snow were thrown by the moon.

Sometime after this, before they got out of the deep snow, Ruby complained of feeling the air raw and cold; her father drew one of the rugs more tightly around her, saying, he hoped they would very soon be at their journey's end.

While Lord Seymore was speaking, the driver turned and looked towards the North, he had done so more than once during the last half hour, and noting this, the Baron turned to look in the same direction.

He saw there the Aurora Borealis in all its glory of gold and crimson light, and knew that in Britain it betokened intense cold; remarking this to the driver he asked,

"Is it so with you? Does the Aurora bring cold?"

"It does so;" returned the man in a subdued voice, "and what I am sorry for, it most always precedes a white frost."

"And what is a white frost, my man?"

"It is a frost," replied the man, "that comes down only in the very coldest time; we can feel it on our faces,

and even through our clothes; my poor horses, tired as they are, will suffer if it be so."

"I hope the old man's other prognostics will not come true like this," said Lord Seymore in a rather severe voice, "my daughter who is of more consequence than all the horses in the Black Forest, is already complaining of the cold, and I begin to fancy that I myself feel it also;" as he spoke he drew the rugs closer round Ruby who was obliged to exert all her powers of endurance to prevent herself from shivering.

"If it is the wolves you refer to," said the man, "there is no fear of that; if he had not told that lie first, I should have paid more attention to him when he said there was a white frost coming on; but I was so sure that he only spoke to fill his purse, it made me give little heed to what he said about the frost; the man is called a true weather prophet, and I think he is; we shall have a cold night of it, you had better sit as close to the young lady as you can, and draw the rugs round you, cover up your heads with one of them, that will keep the warmth around you better than anything else, we shall soon be out of this drift; I see the part where the road rises at no great distance; when we get there I will let my horses rest five minutes, and then they will go on like a couple of chamois."

Lord Seymore did as the driver had suggested, but he knew that his daughter felt the cold more than she would acknowledge, and earnestly wished he had heeded the old man's warning, and remained in the little inn.

A low sound of the wind passing over the trees, as if it were going to blow severely, came at times, shaking

down the snow upon their heads, and what was worse, warning them that with it, the cold would be sensibly increased.

Lord Seymore could see the driver pulling up the collar of his coat, tightening the scarf he wore around his waist, and settling the rug over his own knees and body, as if preparing himself for intense cold; all this giving rise to great anxiety in the Baron's mind, who knew that a delicate girl like his daughter, was ill-fitted to endure the cold they would probably experience.

"How far have we still to go, and how long do you think it will take us?" asked Lord Seymore.

"When we reach the height yonder, and are out of this deep snow we shall have gone eight miles on our road, there are six more to travel."

"How long will you take to drive those six?"

"With fresh horses and a beaten road it could be done in half an hour," replied the driver, "these horses of mine are worn out with wading through this long drift, they were not fresh when we started; it will take at least an hour, perhaps an hour and a half."

The Baron clasped his daughter closer to his side as he thought with horror of what she must endure ere that hour and a half were passed; he now knew well what a white frost was, felt it falling around him, felt the piercing wind penetrating through his flesh to his very bones, and he shuddered as he thought how Ruby must suffer.

"Can you tell the hour?" asked he of the driver, "I am afraid to displace the wraps that are round us both to look at my watch."

"Yes," said the driver as he looked up to the sky, "it

is now between eleven and twelve; I wish we were housed, the moon is going down fast."

"Between eleven and twelve!" repeated Lord Seymore, "that is impossible, we could not have been five hours and a half on the way."

"No," said the driver, "you must remember we did not start at six as was proposed, we were chaffering with old Jacques until it was nearly seven o'clock, my horses, as I have told you more than once, are not fresh, had I known of the snow drift before we left, I would not have started; they took three hours to come through that, and it has almost done them up."

"Is there no nearer place than that for which we are making, even a peasant's hut, where we could rest, and have shelter and warmth for the night?" asked Lord Seymore.

"No," replied the man, who had now got his horses on to the higher ground and was giving them a rest, as he had said, for five minutes, "there is no shelter for man or beast nearer than the inn we are making for, you must wrapt yourselves well up, the horses know the way, they will do their best. Thank God, we are out of that snow drift."

There was no help for it, it must be endured as patiently as possible, the father drew his daughter still closer to him, the air was bitter, and he fancied that each few minutes Ruby was becoming colder and colder.

They were now driving on at a brisk pace, it was evident the horses knew their way, and were as anxious to get on as those they drew; they had gone about half a mile past the snow drift, the road was clear enough,

owing to the whiteness of the snow all around, yet the moon was sinking fast, and leaving deep shadows on their path where before all was brightness.

A low muffled sound struck on Lord Seymore's ear which he fancied must be produced by distant thunder, muffled and indistinctly heard through the snow covered trees.

As the sound fell on his ear, he saw the driver start and turn half round, then urge his horses on to increased speed with both reins and voice; the animals themselves pricked up their ears, and indistinctly as the Baron saw them, he fancied they evinced tokens of fear.

"Are the horses afraid of thunder," asked Lord Seymore.

The man did not answer, but leant forward as if he would again urge the horses by pulling the reins, and talked to them in the phraseology he was accustomed to use, heeding nothing else.

Another sound similar to the former, but nearer, came as if borne on the wind toward them; it did not seem so like thunder as before, but it was unlike anything Lord Seymore had ever heard.

The man now started to his feet, almost leaned over his horses, and hurled the seat he sat upon from the sleigh, calling aloud to the horses in a strong encouraging voice; the animals themselves, it was evident, were now in terror, and Lord Seymore astonished at what he saw, exclaimed in a louder voice than before and with impatience:

"What is the matter? What noise is that?"

"My God! don't you know it is the wolves?" ex-

claimed the driver, not for an instant turning his head or ceasing his utmost efforts to urge on his horses.

A moment more and the forest behind them seemed to be alive with a quick yelping sound, a short bark now and then, being mixed with the yapping yells which came nearer and nearer every instant, the speed of the horses being nothing in comparison to that of the animals by which they were pursued.

On they went in the strife for life against death, a death the most horrible human nature can conceive; to be torn to pieces by savage brutes, one half of the body alive, the other rent and quivering under the teeth of wolves!

The speed of the horses seemed to increase, Lord Seymore turned that he might see the danger which threatened them, the wolves were now so near that their panting could be distinctly heard, as now and then some of the pack less strong than the others would slacken their speed, while the foremost still pressed on; he was paralyzed with horror as he saw that the danger did not merely threaten; it was certain, the wolves were almost upon them.

Deceived by the soft snow, on which the feet of the animals made no sound, Lord Seymore had fancied they might yet be at a considerable distance; alas! he saw within a few hundred yards, scores of savage beasts sufficient to overcome and consume them and their horses, had they a dozen to bear them away, instead of two.

On they go in their hopeless race, the wolves gaining upon them every moment, the driver calls out.

"In the right side of the sleigh you will find a revolver

ready loaded ; one wolf will be in advance of the pack, shoot him down."

The revolver is found ; Lord Seymore is leaning over the back of the sleigh ready to take aim. Not a moment too soon. The foremost of the pack is within a few yards of the sleigh, running with the lopping gallop peculiar to the wolf, the head bent down, the red tongue lolling out.

In a moment he is weltering in his blood, the rest stay their footsteps hang back for an instant, snuff around their comrade, and, maddened by the sight of his blood, tear him to pieces in a moment, and then leap forward with redoubled fury.

Two are now in advance of the others, but the time they have lost in devouring their companion, short as it is, has given the horses a fresh start, and it is some minutes before they gain their old place in the race. The Baron is prepared for them, the two foremost lie dead as the first had done.

The wolves, after another short delay, waste no more breath in unavailing howls, but rush on with deadly rage; already one has his paws on the back of the seat, trying to climb into the sleigh ; he also falls under Lord Seymore's shot, but all in vain, the whole pack is close upon them, the brave old man feels that he must die fighting for his child, he sees one way, and one only, in which he can save her, he springs to his feet, he will leap from the back of the sleigh among the enraged animals; while they are tearing him to pieces, his child will escape.

As the thought crosses his brain, ere he has time to put it into execution, the loud pealing of a horn fills the

air as if it were close to their ears; the wolves stand at bay, almost draw back. A sleigh containing two men is rushing down upon them from a cross road in the forest, the two sleighs are close beside each other, the strangers firing at the wolves.

Frightened and panic stricken by the trumpet sound, and at the sight of the dead bodies of their comrades, several of whom lie gasping on the ground, their blood staining the white snow, the wolves draw back with loud yells, and then disperse among the trees at each side of the forest road.

"Jump in here," cries the traveller, who is in a very different kind of sleigh from that in which Lord Seymore and his daughter drive; as he speaks, throwing rugs covered with buffalo skins open to admit Ruby and her fatherinto the back of the sleigh where he himself sits.

"For God's sake, haste!" cries the driver, "the wolves are only gone for a moment, they will be back whenever they recover from their panic."

"Take my daughter first," cries Lord Seymore, raising Ruby in his arms, "she is stiff with cold and almost insensible. Ruby, Ruby, speak to me; merciful heaven! she is frozen to death!"

In an instant one of the travellers in the other sleigh, who appears to be the master, snatches her from her father's arms calling out,

"Come in for God's sake, we will soon restore her to warmth and life when we escape from the wolves."

The man who speaks is evidently more accustomed to travelling in a snowy region than Lord Seymore, and he knows well that the cold is not intense enough to

freeze any one to death, unless they were more exposed than a girl rolled up in rugs as she is, could have been. He at once conjectures the truth, that the girl is sick and faint with cold, and that terrified by the wolves, she has swooned away.

In an instant the traveller's long fur coat is stripped off, and Ruby wrapped warmly in it, is placed between her father and the generous traveller, who has risked his own life to save hers.

While they are thus employed, Lord Seymore's sleigh driver has seized one of the horns and is blowing loudly, while his right hand is employed in cutting the traces of the horses from the sleigh they are to abandon.

A second after they have started on their way, the two powerful animals which draw the travellers' sleigh bounding with a speed like that of the wind, first, one or two solitary yelps, and then a loud chorus from the whole pack, tells them that there is now another race to commence for life from death.

The freed horses rush into the wood, the poor animals, now relieved from the weight of the sleigh, seem as if they are quite fresh again, and attracted by them, the wolves turn their course from the travellers for a second or two.

It is but for a few moments. With renewed yelps and howls they jump upon the empty sleigh, tearing the robes and lining to pieces. Disappointed in their efforts to obtain food, they utter what seems one loud yell, and then with their long loping gallop, slow but persistent, they resume their untiring pursuit of the travellers.

Whether some of the stray wolves have come across

one of the horses, or finding the snow among the trees too deep, the poor animal has returned to the road, it is impossible to say, but there he is between the travellers' sleigh and the wolves for one moment, in another he is overpowered, torn to pieces and devoured by the savage beasts.

Lord Seymore's guide has not looked behind, but he knows what has happened as well as if he had seen his poor horse perish, and the wail of anguish which escapes his lips, tells his fellow-travellers how dear the dumb companion of his journeys must have been to him.

As the low cry of the sleigh driver comes across Lord Seymore's ears, he remembers the kind way in which the man always addressed his horses, never once using the whip, but calling to them, and changing his voice with his words as if they were human beings, and understood each tone and word to which he gave utterance.

The traveller's horses are noble animals, fresh and unwearied, and are speeding on at a rate which bids fair for escape from the wolves, occupied, as part of them now are, in tearing the horse to pieces, others fighting with their fellows for a morsel of his flesh.

Meanwhile the traveller and Lord Seymore are doing their best to restore Ruby to consciousness by administering a few drops of a restorative as she begins to breathe. Ruby at last gladdens her father's heart by opening her eyes, and heaving a deep sigh of relief, as he tells her what he hopes is true, that they have escaped from the wolves, and are now not far from the confines of the forest.

As he speaks, to his intense relief, the anxious father

sees in the distance a light as of flashing torches. Torches they are, carried, as he soon finds, by a body of the peasants whose cabins lie around the little inn at which they had intended to spend the night when they left Strasburg.

Having heard the peculiar cry the wolves give when in pursuit of human prey or horses, they had sallied out in a body with lighted pine knots, which they wave high in the air, the glare frightening the wolves and keeping them at bay, until the travellers have passed the borders of the forest and are safe, surrounded by the peasants with their lighted flambeaux.

It is a strange sight to see the wild animals ranged almost in files along the road, retreating slowly, yet keeping their faces towards those whom only a few minutes before they expected to be their prey, now and then emitting a short sharp back, the yells they use in pursuit completely stilled, until fairly frightened by the torches, they with one accord turn round, and with disappointed howls disappear into the forest.

The travellers are now safe in front of the little inn. The stranger jumps to the ground first, and, receiving Ruby from her father's arms, places her inside the spacious kitchen with its bright lamp light, and warm stove.

"Ruby."

She looks up in his face; it is Herbert Sydney who has saved her life!

"In less than a month I shall be in England to claim you for my bride."

Herbert Sydney is gone, wrapped again in his fur coat which has by its warmth tended more than any-

thing else to restore Ruby to consciousness; receiving the grateful thanks of Lord Seymour outside the little châlet.

"You speak such good English, that you must have been in the country; should you ever find yourself there again, you will allow Lord Seymour to express his gratitude to you in his own house, to receive you there as his most honoured guest. To whom am I indebted for my own life, and for that of a daughter who is dearer to me than existence?"

"If I live, I shall be in England and at the Tower of London in less than a month hence; (when you spoke I at once recognized Lord Seymour), I will then introduce myself; meantime, if you think me worthy of a thought, it must be as 'the traveller of the Black Forest."

An instant more and Herbert Sydney is in his sleigh, the horses bounding along with renewed speed after the drink of meal and water given them by their careful driver.

Lord Seymour stands looking after the sleigh with its occupant whom he had barely seen in the grey light. "Who can he be" he asked himself, "who refuses thus mysteriously to give his name to Lord Seymour? His manners and appearance both, bespeak him a gentleman; why, after doing me such a signal service, does he refuse me his name? He cannot be low born, with such an air and voice, that is hardly possible."

He now thinks of the wolves, and of the fool-hardiness which could tempt the traveller out again in the midnight on such a dangerous road.

The landlord of the inn is close to him and remarks,

"These are the finest horses I have ever seen, I think they belong to the Grand Duke; at all events that is one of his servants who is driving the gentleman."

Without replying to the man's observation Lord Seymour says, "Is not he incurring great danger from the wolves in again taking the road so late?"

"Oh no!" replies the landlord, "he is going to the castle of the Grand Duke, which is only two miles distant, and the whole way is thickly dotted with peasant's huts along each side of the road; no fear of the wolves, they know too much to go there.

"What Grand Duke do you mean?" asks the Baron.

"The Grand Duke of Baden," replies the man, "he has one of his finest Castles two miles from this place, although Baden is so far off; they are going to have a grand gathering there to-morrow, all the nobles round about, that man is one of them, but he is no German, he speaks with a foreign accent."

"He speaks English purely enough, perhaps he is English," replies the Baron, speaking his own thoughts aloud more than replying to the remarks of the landlord.

"As to that he might be French," answers the man; "I heard him speak as good French as if he were a Parisian, to that driver of yours who is one of the half German, half French breed from Strasburg."

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DICK HALBERT'S CASTLE.

CHAPTER XXXV.

DICK HALBERT'S TOWER.

LORD SYDENHAULT had food and water, and was regularly taken on deck three times a day.

The winds seemed contrary; the little vessel was either tacking or becalmed, half the time; he knew their progress must be slow, and he heard his brother and Dick Halbert, the master of the vessel, cursing their bad luck in being kept so long from reaching Guernsey, which he found was to be their destination.

The time however came at last; Arthur was taken from his dark cabin, his hands tied behind his back, his eyes blindfolded, by the express desire of Tom Holling, whom he overheard telling the skipper to do it, saying,

"I would not face that idiot's eyes again for a thousand pounds."

Arthur's arms were grasped by Tom Holling on the one side, and by the skipper on the other. Walking thus he was made to climb a steep, uneven path, then walk a short way, enter a house and ascend a winding staircase of many stone steps.

Arrived at the top his eyes and hands were unbound, and he was thrust violently forward, a second more and he found himself alone, and heard first one, and then another rusty bar drawn across the door of the room in which he stood.

The night was so dark that the removal of the bandage from his eyes did not help him much in ascertaining where he was, when suddenly a gust of wind blew across his face, and turning in the direction from which it came he saw a single twinkling star out in the dark sky.

With what words of hope did that star speak to the poor lonely man! He felt that he was at the mercy of villains, but he also knew that the God who had poised that star in the firmament of heaven was able to deliver him, even as He had delivered Joseph of old from his many brethren, and God sustained him with the faith thus given until it was lost in sight.

A volley of oaths from one of the men outside recalled him to the present world; it was Dick Halbert who spoke.

"You've broken the lantern, you careless land lubber; and now we'll perhaps break both our necks going down this ricketty old staircase from which the bannister has been rotted away more nor a hundred years ago."

"Why don't you have a rope tied along the side?" asks Tom Holling.

"Why don't we have a rope?" reiterates the other curtly, "why don't we have a coach and six to go up and down? Just cause we don't need a rope; did'nt I tell you that we puts all the goods down in the cellar for the last seven years. That old roof there leaks and spoils them, and we hav'nt used it for I dun know how long, or else I could'nt make a cage of it for your bird; I should'nt have told you that, though, perhaps you'll take him away with you again for fear his health 'll suffer. Ha! ha! ha!"

Arthur heard the men descending the stone steps of the stair-case slowly, in a shuffling way, as if they were crawling down backwards using both feet and hands; the sounds became fainter, and at last died away altogether, and nothing could be heard save the sullen splash of the waves which sounded as if they were climbing the rocks at no great distance.

Arthur knelt down with his face turned towards the hole through which he had seen the star, and there he prayed for deliverance from these men, and that his mother might be strengthened to bear this trial, that she might have grace given her to believe that this was only a trial of their faith, and that God, who had permitted it to be sent, would send also a way of escape. He lay down on the hard boards to seek rest, and rest came as sweetly upon him there, as if he had lain in the luxurious bed-chamber he occupied at Sydenhault Hall, and his dreams were pure and joyful. At times he walked with his mother, clasping her hand, as he did in the days of her blindness, now passed away, and she smiled upon him in his sleep as he told her, that the habit of leading her about had become so fixed, that he feared he would never be able to give it up. And then he was far away in a quiet, humble home, shaded by green forest trees, and the vines of sunny France hung with their purple fruit beside his open window. Again, he is walking in the calm moonlight, under the drooping boughs of the perfume-shedding lime trees; he holds in his, the hand of one nearer and dearer than his mother, he looks into her eyes, and tells her he must go on the morrow, but he will come again, ere many days pass, and she must

watch for him at that vine-curtained window; ere the leaves have faded, or the grapes ripened, he will be back again to his beloved.

He is on the point of telling her a secret, something that will make her heart beat for joy, to tell her that she, the painter's daughter, has not married a poor artist, but one who is the owner of broad lands, of ancient lineage, of high estate, an English nobleman. He opens his lips to say the first words, and lo! the spell is broken, he is awake, and the words which would have changed all his life, given him joy and gladness, in place of woe and dreariness; making his own path, and another's, bright with flowers and sunshine, are left unsaid, as they were in the past sweet time of which his dream is but the repetition and the shadow.

The gray light of early morn is now breaking over the sea, and the tops of the cliffs are begining to blush in the rays of the rising sun; on the

> "Sea's broad breast
> Dance drowsy stars that long to rest"

and he sees them dying out, one by one, as the shadows of the night pass away. The thin edge of a young moon, holds its place after all her attendants are gone, sailing placidly on her way through the azure sky she seems every moment to become clearer and more clear, coming out and shining upon him from under each fleecy cloud as it passes over her. Then the scene of his dream is brought even more vividly before his mind, and he sees the face he so loved in his youth — that face which his poor wandering brain was ever searching for, in the bewildering time when he could not think — is

turned up to his own, calling his attention to the crescent moon, seen through the over-arching boughs and rustling leaves; he remembers her words "When you see that moon, you must think of me, and I shall bid it tell you to hasten back to your home; to your love."

He remembers the words that rushed to his lips, yet were unspoken; postponed by a romantic fancy that he meant should make her thrice blessed; and, striving for an overflowing cup of sweetness, he had lost the life treasure of both; his own life a blank — and her's? He shuddered to think what hers may have been through those long years of loneliness and desolation.

He started to his feet, and going to the window, a slit in the solid masonry a few inches broad, he tried to put his head out into the air of heaven. He now sees that the place he is confined in is a small room, in the corner of the building; on both the outside walls are loop-holes like the one through which he had seen the moon, he tries to look through each in succession, but can only see the patch of sky in a straight line with his head; hear the sullen dash of the waves on the rocks below, and he asks himself, how long he is to be shut out from all nature save that patch of sky, — the sound of those climbing waves?

A moment more, a little bird is sitting on the sill of the opening in the wall, its head turned up to the sky, with voice and heart trilling out a song of loud praise to the God who had given to the earth this clear morning.

Arthur's heart feels light, almost joyful, as he listens to the strain. "God who careth for the little birds, will He not much more care for me?" And kneeling down,

with his eyes fixed on bird and sky, he also gives praise to the God who had given him back his senses and his memory. And the full assurance is given him, that in God's own way and time, the Angel of the Covenant will be sent to open his prison doors.

The shadows of night were closing in on poor Arthur, up in the old tower, when sounds of footsteps ascending outside, struck upon the ear of the wearied man, who longed so earnestly for some token from the outer world other than the dashing and moaning of the many voiced sea.

In a second or two, a head was thrust close to the aperture, which even in the dim grey light, he had no difficulty in recognizing as that of Dick Halbert.

"I'm afeard your hungry," said the man, "and I've brought you your dinner. I went away last night in the dark about some business of my own, and I've only come back this minute, I've not taken my own dinner yet, but I have brought you yours; so you see I'm not going to let you die of hunger.

As the man spoke he shoved through the loop-hole a parcel of bread and beef rolled up in part of a dirty newspaper, followed by a can of water, the latter clear and fresh.

"I'm going out to-morrow morning," continued Dick, "with my little boat to try my luck at line fishing, and if I have a chance to get a good haddock, you'll get a bit of it."

Arthur thanked the man, speaking in a free, friendly voice, determined if possible to make friends with him. If the man could be bribed for one hundred pounds a

year to keep him there, he could be bribed for double the sum to let him go free. It was too soon yet to make such a proposition, but on the next visit he would try it, if Dick seemed to be in a suitable temper.

The man was gone in a second or two, and Arthur left to eat with great eagerness the bread and beef which he would not have looked at with the thought of eating eight days previously; as he ate, he thought of the little bird of the morning, and placed some crumbs of bread in each of the loop-holes in hopes that his little friend would visit him again.

On the morrow the bird came to sing his song of praise, and then he found and ate the meal so wonderfully provided for him in this bare place, and the little grateful heart gave utteranec to another pean of praise and joy.

Dick Halbert did not come with the fish as he had promised, but he returned at night with beef and bread as before; telling Arthur that he had not been able to go fishing as he had anticipated; he had a great deal to do now, and would not fish for some days. Dick stayed longer than he did the previous evening, asking Arthur among many other questions, what his name was, and then saying in surprise,

"Arthur Penryth! Arthur Penryth! That's queer, now, do you know I thought you was some half cracked brother of Tom Holling's? You're precious like each other, though you're not so black as he is, maybe you hav'nt sailed as much as Tom?"

"I think I am Tom Holling's brother," said Arthur.

"If you are then, he's Tom Penryth, and not Tom Holling," replied the other, "he's a sly fox, he gave his

directions to put on a letter, an' its 'Captain Tom Holling' to the care of some man in London city, I have it in my pocket-book, but it's dark out here, and I'm no good at reading writ no how."

"Then how will you be able," said Arthur, "to write the direction when you send a letter to Tom Holling?"

"Oh! I'll manage that; is that the old bit of paper I brought round your beef last night?" inquired he, looking at the scrap of newspaper which Arthur had straightened out, carefully read and re-read, and then saved and laid out on the floor, looking on the printed words as companions in his desolate prison house.

"Yes, I was nearly as much pleased to get that piece of old newspaper as I was to get the food, although you left me long enough for my appetite to have grown pretty keen before you brought it."

"Well then," said Dick, "I don't want to be hard on you, an' when I can get hold on them, I'll bring you some of them papers to keep you from thinking the time long; you've precious little amusement up in this old place, I reckon."

He withdrew his head from the loop-hole as if about to descend, and then putting it back again, called out,

"Oh! I'll tell you something that'll give you more room to reel, do you see that," pointing to a low door close to the outer wall which, together with another larger one on the opposite side, Arthur had in vain tried to move at intervals since the first gray light dawned upon him in the tower. "If you'll put your thumb on them two marks at the top, and press them down, the door 'ill fall into the floor; it leads to other two places as big as the one

you're in, and that way you'll have good accommodation, parlor, kitchen and hall, and need'nt get lonesome."

The man was gone, but ere the sound of his retreating footsteps in reaching the ground had died away, Arthur had put his thumbs on the marks indicated; with hard pressure, the door sank down through two groves in the flooring, disclosing two apartments, the one leading to the other, exactly similar to that he occupied. Both rooms were empty, save for the dust and cobwebs, of which they had a greater share than the outer one.

In due time Dick Halbert brought the promised fish; he was in great good humor, talking more than usual, and even laughing, in his gruff way, as he recounted the manœuvres he had employed in catching the fish, and the success he had had; suddenly checking himself he said,

"Now, I want you to tell me that queer name of yours again, an if it's true that Tom Holling's name is the same as yours is, because I want to have a hank round Tom's neck. I think somehow he has cheated me; he's only going to give me a hunder poun in the year for keeping of you here, an' all the expense and trouble I'm at, an' I'm beginning to tire of it. I'm tied to this confounded place, if I will, or if I won't, when I've a live creature to feed every day, an my old 'oman's not light on her feet, as she could mount the ladder here, which is the way I comes to you."

This was the opportunity Arthur had sought, and it seemed a golden one.

"My name is Arthur Penryth, and Tom Holling's real name is Edward Penryth."

"Oh the sly old fish!" exclaimed the sea-man, "He was afeard if I knew his true name I would try to make him pay more than his scrubby one hunder poun'; what is his one hunder poun' to me if I do nothing all my life but mount up and down this ladder to look at a rat in a hole? Tell me now like a good un if Tom's able to give more than the hunder poun, if he's hard wrought on."

"Yes," replied Arthur, "he's able to give you much more than a hundred pounds, but, if you'll let me out of this place, and take me to London, I'll give you two hundred pounds a year as long as you live for doing nothing, but just for letting me go."

"Ah ha! my lad, that's the way the win blows, is't?" said Dick, "I know a trick worth two o' that, if you're not a fool now, you was a fool, an have been signed over a fool by the law, an' Tom Holling an' every one belonging to you wants to get rid of you an keep you out o' the way, an that's why they're givin me the hunder pouns. Make yourself contented here, for if my name's Dick Halbert you'll never get out of them square walls till Dick or you's dead, one of us, but if you helps me to get more money out o' Tom Holling, in course you'll get better grub, so it'll be a good job for us both."

"You have been sadly deceived, my man," said Arthur, "I have never been made a fool by the law; I have no friends who are interested in confining me here; the only near relation who is interested in my disappearance, is the man who calls himself Tom Holling. He is my younger brother, and has no doubt brought me here that he may possess himself of my inheritance. My

mother is the Countess of Sydenhault, and she will give you a large reward if you bring me to her or give her information of where I am."

Dick absolutely roared with laughter, clapping his hands and rubbing his knees, in his extasy almost tumbling off the ladder.

"A Countess!" shrieked he, with another burst of uncontrollable laughter, "Your mother a Countess! Oh! that beats the winds, blow they high or low; yon old frump with the black gown at Brest, a Countess! Oh! a crazy man is the one for lies all the world over. Why, man, if your mother was a Countess, she would have a gold crown on her head, nearly as good as the Queen's; do you think a Countess out of Lunun town would go an' live in an old hole like Brest? If ever I takes the old lugger out to sea again, (which I can't do as long as I have you to give meat to), an' the wind's not just right what I would have it, I'll take you down to the shore to tell two or three dozen of your great lies; faith they'll blow her out to sea as quick as a Nor'-Wester."

Weeks had grown into months, and still Lord Sydenhault was a close prisoner in the three rooms of the old tower in Guernsey. Dick Halbert, however, had given himself more liberty than he did at first, by bringing enough food at one time to last during several days, and had it not been for the old newspapers, of which he seemed to have a good supply, the poor captive would have had a terrible life of it; as it was, he read and reread them all. They consisted of papers, printed in Paris some ten years previously; every advertisement

was carefully gone over, and each soiled paragraph spread out and laid aside for future perusal.

The weather was bitterly cold and stormy, his little bird, who for many weeks had visited him each morning, had long ago taken its departure in search of winter quarters in a more genial clime. Dick Halbert now would sometimes be gone for eight days together, by which time Arthur's salt beef and coarse bread would be dry and stale, and worse than all, the water, which while Dick was at home, was always pure and clean, became so fetid as to render it almost impossible for him to drink. He had made many attempts to persuade Dick to go to Sydenhault Villa, there to obtain an interview with his mother, or in her absence, with Mrs. Morgan. An interview with either, Arthur knew, would be equally effectual; were his situation once known, relief would soon come; but every effort to make any impression on the seaman's mind in this respect was perfectly futile. Dick had been told that he was a fool who had been made a fool by law, and whose acts were so obnoxious to his family, that they were glad to pay this sum to be rid of him; and the best evidence of the truth of this, he had the first hundred pounds in his possession; he did not believe one word of the story told by Arthur, that he was the son of the Countess of Sydenhault, nor did he believe now that Tom Holling's name was other than the one by which he had always known him. He looked upon the name as equally a delusion with the title Arthur had given his mother.

One morning he appeared at the aperture at a much earlier hour than usual.

"I am going to your old place at Brest," said he, "tell me what I will bring you for a keepsake, and if you have any money in your pocket to buy it, I'll do it."

"I have money in my pocket," replied Arthur, "and I will give you enough to buy what I want, and as a reward for your doing so, I will give you my watch and chain. I want you to bring me all the newspapers which have been published in Brest since I left it, I will also give you a list of some books."

Tearing a slip from the margin of one of the newspapers, he wrote upon it the names of a few books, and giving it to the skipper, together with a couple of sovereigns, said, "you may take this to a bookseller, he will give you the books, and there is money to pay for them."

"You are a rich fellow. I did not think they would have trusted you with so much money," said the skipper with a queer smile, as he pocketed the coin, "good day to you; I'll bring you what you want."

On reaching the bottom of the ladder, Dick looked inquiringly at the slip of paper. "Ah! ha!" said he, bringing his finger down the list of books which the poor prisoner wanted to while away the lonely hours; counting each line as he drew his finger down the narrow piece of newspaper. "I would not wonder but there's something in that paper that would get me into a hobble, if I was fool enough to shew it to any body at Brest; them fellows as can write are always up to some trick or another; that crazy fool up there is as deep as the Baltic, if he cant't do me one way, he'll try another."

As he spoke, he crumpled up the paper in his hand and going into the house, flung it in the fire.

"I'll bring him his papers though," said Dick to himself; "I dare say he needs something up there, without the sea to look at, or a dog to speak to, or anything; I wish he would take it into his head to hang himself; I'm sick and tired o' the job o' keeping him."

On his return from Brest, Dick Halbert was as good as his word, bringing with him every paper which had been published in Brest since the day of Arthur's mysterious disappearance; every one of which contained an advertisement offering a reward of one hundred thousand pounds from the Countess of Sydenhault to any one who would give such information as would lead to the recovery of her son, Lord Sydenhault.

Arthur cut out several of these advertisements and when Dick brought him his next dole of bread and beef, he read them over to him, giving him each separate advertisement as he had finished reading it.

"These advertisements are for me," said he, "it will be well worth your while to take them to some person who can read; get him to read them over to you again, and then make a journey to Sydenhault Villa, Bayswater, where the one who can give information, is to go and see her Ladyship personally."

"I'll take the bits o' paper," said the man, much more inclined to consider the whole as a part of the prisoner's lunacy than anything else, "but I'm afeerd its some part o' the foolish story you told me afore."

"Cannot your son read?" asked Arthur.

"No," replied the skipper, "I took good care o' that. I never saw good come o' readin nor writin either; all the sons as I know who can read cheats their fathers

out o' their boats or luggers or anything they have ; my son is up to tricks enough wi'out that."

"Then," suggested Arthur, "you had better go to two or three different men who can read, and get each of them to tell you what is printed on these slips of paper ; if they all tell you the same story it must be right, suppose you take them to London, you surely know several there who can read."

"That's good advice," replied Dick, in a hesitating manner, and then, as if a new light had broken in upon him, dispelling his perplexity he exclaimed in a brisk tone, "I'll tell you what I'll do, if I find out that you're telling me the truth, I'll go first to Tom Holling, 'cause you see I have to keep honor with him, and if it's not worth his while to give me as much as the old lady offers, why then I'll strike the bargain with her."

The skipper was gone, the echoing sound of his footsteps, as he descended the ladder in the now almost darkness of night, sounded like the knell of every hope in life to poor Arthur. He knew that Tom Holling *alias* Edward Penryth, would give all he had power over in the world to prevent his brother's face ever again being seen in England ; that by bribing one of the servants, or by some other crafty plan, he would prevent any person, having the appearance of a sea-faring man, having access to the Countess. To prevent any more visits from Dick Halbert, Edward would, no doubt, himself come to the Tower, and have him disposed of in some way, which would be an effectual bar to such demands for the future.

What he had hoped was to bring about his deliverance, would in all probability, have the opposite effect.

He ran to the loop-hole. and putting his hands together in a hollow form, called out aloud the name of the skipper.

Dick, who was outside the Tower, hearing the voice, at once climbed the ladder ; at first he had been careful to take it down every time he descended, but for several weeks past he had allowed it to rest against the wall.

"What do you want ?" cried Dick, "are you taking a fit ?" he spoke in accents of alarm ; he was, within the past hour, as anxious to preserve Arthur alive, as he had before been to get rid of him ; if he could obtain a hundred thousand pounds by delivering him up to his mother, it would be a bad bargain to give his body to Tom Holling for one thousand.

"No," replied Arthur, "I am not taking a fit, I wish I were, it would be better for you and me both if I were dead ; death would be better for me than life in this horrible place ; and as for you, if I were dead, you would get your one thousand pounds from Tom Holling. I want you to take my watch, I promised it to you ; you have not brought me the books as you said you would ; but I will give you my watch, and if you go to the Villa at Bayswater, the Countess of Sydenhault will believe all you say when you shew it to her. She can give you the money, but I don't think Tom Holling can."

"I'll not take your watch to keep myself," said the man, "if Tom Holling were to come here and find your watch gone and you dead, he would per'aps have me taken up for stealing ; Tom's a clever chap, and would like the whole to work for his own side ; but I'll take it with me, and if the papers here read as you say, and

Tom does'nt come to terms, I'll shew your watch to the old lady, and if you be her son, in course she'll know it."

Dick Halbert took the watch and going down the ladder a second time, entered the low room in the Tower. It was a wretched place; old barrels in one corner, an old tumble down bedstead in another, a table, and a few ricketty chairs, completing the furniture. A brightly burning fire on the hearth, dispelled part of the gloom, shewing a very dirty-looking, middle-aged woman, who employed herself by turns tasting and stirring a pot of soup, from which issued a strong odour of vegetables and meat, telling the skipper that the savory mess was ready for supper.

"I say, Bess," said the seaman, after he had satisfied the cravings of his inner man, "I must go from 'ome on business t'morrow mornin', and must trust to you to feed that poor, mad cretur up in the Tower. I have neither bread nor meat that 'ill serve him for more nor a day, and it'll be a week afore I can be back again, the ladder is stout and firm enough; you're not afeerd to climb it, eh?"

"No, I'm not afeerd in the daylight," said the woman, "but I don't like to climb the ladder in the dark, as you do, every night waitin' till August has gone to bed; you'll take August with you, there is no need for me waiting till it's night."

"I'll take August wi' me, in course," replied the man, "it's not only for him that I feeds the mad un i' the dark; there may be ships passing, or worse, lying at anchor, where the mariners might be using a spy glass, and if they saw me twice, which might happen, going up that

ladder carryin' a bundle and a flask, as I al'as do, they might smell a rat, and come on shore to see what was ado."

"Why could'nt I feed him in the early mornin?" asked she, "I'm always up by daybreak and sometimes afore, it's near as dark then as at night, but it's not so gruesome, and I should'nt be afeerd in the mornin. They say the ghosts at walk i' the night goes back to their graves afore mornin."

"I don't see but what you might." Dick spoke slowly as if he was meditating what might be the consequence of this concession he was making to his wife's fear of the ghosts, "only be sure you don't let the daylight come in."

"Never fear," replied the woman, "they won't have light enough to see me out at sea, and if August is gone, there's not much chance of any one bein' round about here. What are you going away for?"

"After a cargo."

"I thought you was'nt going to sail again, after getting this money for doing nothing as you may say; and I don't like living here all the time alone; especially as you never leave a drop o' drink now to cheer me up."

"You're better without the drink, Bess," replied her husband; "if I were to leave drink beside you, you might burn yourself and the old place both afore I came home."

"And then again I might'nt," said the woman; "I never burnt down the house afore, when there was plenty drink in't."

"No, but you made yourself so nasty and ill-tempered

that August told me he would run away, an' I had some thought o' doing the same myself; that drink's no good nohow, if it were'nt for the drink I took that night, I should never have bargained wi' Tom Holling to keep that poor crazy chap o' a brother o' his; I repented o' the bargain the first day he was on board the lugger, an' I'll repent it every day 'till I get shot o' him."

The seaman took his way on the morrow, and was only a few hours gone, when a storm arose which seemed to shake the old Tower to its foundation; the storm was from the sea, and sent the great billows rolling up above the rocks and on to the table land on which the old tower was built. It was no night, that, for the woman to climb the ladder with Arthur's food, it is doubtful if her husband even would have done so, accustomed as he was to climb the ratlings of his ship during a storm.

The wind from the sea came tearing through the trees which fringed with a deep belt the edge of the headland above the rocks, bending their strong trunks, and then careering round the old Tower, as if it would bend that also to its will.

Dick's wife stood looking through the low window of the Tower, out on the storm, shuddering as she saw the waves dashing, and listened to their roaring, mixed with the fitful gusts of wind that raved and tore among the trees, "I'm glad I did'nt promise to go with the man's food to-night, I could'nt go nohow. I'm thinkin the ghosts of the folk at was wrecked on the shore here last winter is out the night. I wish I had a drop o' good brandy or anything at would comfort a body."

She shut down the window as she spoke, barring the

shutter to close out the eerie sights and sounds which made her heart shiver.

There were others out on that stormy sea; brave, true hearts that quailed lest their little craft should be dashed to pieces.

'Thaniel Reil and his sons were trying their best to find a haven for the cutter, which had been caught unawares by the storm, and forced out of its course.

It was fine, settled weather when they left their own home at Sydenhault Oaks, and although they were short of a man, one of Thaniel's sons having been disabled by an accident, they did not fear making their trip with one hand less. But it was hard work in the storm, and it was only with the early dawn that they got their vessel into a little cove on the Guernsey coast, the very place where Dick Halbert's craft lay when he was on the island.

Lying close under the rocks, they were themselves hidden from view, even if it had been broad daylight, but looking from their craft they could see half the old Tower, as it loomed up on the table land, above their heads.

"Come here, Haco;" called out Hugh a little after they had got the cutter all right and tight, safely into the cove; "look at that woman climbing up the face of the Tower."

Haco's pocket glass, his constant companion, was in an instant at his eye.

"She's climbing a ladder, Hugh," said he, "and carrying a tin pail with a bundle a top of it in one hand, with the other she's helping herself up, clinging to the ladder."

The father, and each of the lads in his turn, looked

through the glass, and saw the woman wait at the loop hole, put in her head as if speaking to some one within, and then thrust the parcel inside, and afterwards the pail.

"She has a good head that woman," said Hugh, "she should be a sailor's wife."

"So she is," said the father, "that's Dick Halbert's wife, it's a long time since I heard they took up their quarters in that old place, I'm afeerd there's foul play going on, silk or lace that's hiding from the Queen does'nt need meat and drink put in to it through a loop hole as I think that woman has done; he's a queer fish, old Dick, and would, I think, be a great villain if he had'nt a chicken heart; I fear there's some poor creature up there that would rather have been on the stormy sea last night, wild as it was."

The storm was pretty well abated, and the cutter now lay quiet, save for the swell which still sent the billows in great volumes towards the shore.

"Ye had better go up, Hugh," continued the old man, "an' see what's ado in the Tower yonder, Dick canna be there, for his craft is no about anywhere, and if it's only the woman, you'll maybe get round her and find out who she brought the meat and drink to."

"May be some cats that they keep there," suggested Hugh, with a laugh.

"No," replied his father, "gin it's no a human being, it's some creature bigger than a cat that would need what she carried in the pail and bundle, but I'm mostly sure it's some poor thing shut up there for no good."

"Well," said Hugh, "we canna do much here at any

rate 'till the swell lulls down, an' that winna be afore night, so we may e'en go an' see the old woman, if she has a cow, she'll maybe sell us some milk for the ship."

So saying he went down to the cabin, accompanied by Haco, and taking a bottle of brandy from the locker, he shewed it to his brother, at the same time motioning him to keep silence while he hid it under his coat.

Haco understood the use the brandy was to be put to, and searching for a demijohn for the milk which they expected to get in return for the brandy, the brothers went on shore; not seeking for the winding path which would bring them easily up to the head-land, but climbing with hands and knees, up the face of the rock. They were soon inside the Tower, and talking to the woman, asking her to sell them milk.

"I've no milk," replied she, "we keep neither cow nor calf here; where do you come from?"

They explained how their little craft had been nearly dashed to pieces, and had only escaped by getting into the cove beside the headland.

"We have a bottle of brandy here," said Hugh, producing it; "that we'll give you for your milk."

"I have no milk, I tell you," said the woman, eyeing the brandy with a greedy look; "but I'll give you beef and fresh bread baked last night, for your brandy, if you'll exchange it; that is if it is good," continued she, checking herself, "let me taste it first."

This was just what Hugh wanted, and he handed her the bottle, saying,

"Here, taste it if you like, it's better than the Queen knows of, an' tell us where we'll get the beef and bread."

The woman uncorked the bottle, and sitting down, put it to her mouth, taking such a draught as astonished both the lads, who stood staring at her, wondering if she meant to empty the bottle before taking it from her lips.

After taking a hearty drink, as if it had been beer instead of brandy she was imbibing, and resting for a second or two, with the brandy bottle firmly clutched in both her hands, she said, smacking her lips as she spoke,

"The brandy's good stuff and strong, to be sure, the best I've tasted for many a long day, the better perhaps that we've had nothing in the house for six months. You'll get the beef and bread in the barrel yonder that has the trencher on top of it." As she spoke, pointing to a barrel in the furthest corner of the room.

The boys took from the barrel, beef and bread, and setting it on the table, each seized a knife and began to help himself, feigning to be very eager to appease his hunger, and apparently not noticing the woman, who was busily engaged in emptying the brandy bottle, a feat which she almost succeeded in accomplishing in a wonderfully short space of time.

She stopped once or twice to take breath, holding the bottle on her knees with both hands, at last in trying to take another drink, she let the bottle slip from off her lap and stooping to save it, fell helplessly on the floor.

The boys looked significantly at each other; it was evident she would soon be fast asleep, and whether she was or not, she was powerless to debar them from trying to find out what had been the object of her morning visit to the top of the tower.

Hugh was the first to mount the ladder, and looking

in, to his great surprise, beheld a man seated on the floor, eating pieces of bread and beef from a paper spread upon his knees. His surprise, however, was quickly turned to horror when the man, raising his head and turning it towards the loop-hole, disclosed the face of Lord Sydenhault, who, every one in Sydenhault Oaks knew, had been carried away months before, by a set of men pretending to be Sedan carriers in Brest.

"Lord Sydenhault!" exclaimed Hugh.

Arthur was close beside the loop-hole in a moment. "Who is it that knows my name here?" said he, eyeing the lad curiously as he spoke.

"I'm one of 'Thaniel Reil's boys that used to come up with fish to the Hall," replied Hugh, "I've often brought bait to yourself, my Lord."

"I recollect your face now; how did you come here my lad?"

"We were sailing to Jersey in the storm last night, and the cutter was driven out of her course; and this morning we got her into a cove down below the rocks there, an jest after we cast anchor we saw a woman going up the ladder here carrying a pail, an' my father sent us to see what it meant; we had some brandy wi' us an' the woman's lying drunk down yonder; it was surely a Providence that brought us here. What way can we get you out, my Lord?"

"A stair-case from below leads up to this room," replied Arthur, "and once at the door, I don't suppose there will be much difficulty; I think there is no lock, only large bars."

Hugh goes down at once to the place where Haco

stands at the foot of the ladder, hurriedly telling the boy whom he had seen through the loop-hole; they enter the house together in search of the stair-case; the woman calls out in a voice so thick and stuttering they can hardly make out the few words she says.

"Dick,— where are you,— Dick? Is — that — you — Dick?"

"Of course it's me," says Haco, "lie still, don't be rising out of your bed in the dark night."

A grunt of satisfaction is the reply, as the woman turns a little more on her face than before.

They have some difficulty in finding the stair-case; it is at last discovered in a low room, quite away from the inhabited part of the building; once there, they are not long in groping their way to the top, although the stair-case is almost dark, the only light coming from a narrow loop hole in the wall. On gaining the top they find little difficulty in drawing the bolts, merely an exercise of manual strength being required to lift the rusty iron bolt from the socket.

In a few seconds, Lord Sydenhault is out on the bare ground, the chill breath of the wintry wind making him shiver, as it passes almost through his frame, enfeebled as it is by long confinement and want of proper food. In making their way to the top of the headland, they come upon the path used by Dick Halbert in going to, and coming from his lugger when it lies in the cove.

'Thaniel Reil is standing on the deck, as first Lord Sydenhault, and then his own boys turn the sharp corner of the peninsula which brings them within a few feet of where the vessel lies; he can scarcely believe his eyes

as he sees Lord Sydenhault leap from a projecting point of the cliff to the vessel's deck.

"Lord Sydenhault!" he exclaims, in much the same accents as his son used a few minutes before, while looking through the loop-hole of the Tower.

"Yes," replies Arthur, speaking in a way in which 'Thaniel Reil has never heard him speak since his boyhood; "you have made a good morning's work, Reil; catching me will pay you better than all the fish you have ever caught in your life, or all the cargoes you have brought home in your cutter."

"It pleases me better than any work I ever did," the old man replies as he looks with serious eyes in the worn face of the Earl.

"Ay, father," says Hugh, who is now on the deck beside Lord Sydenhault, "it was my Lord that the woman went up to with the pail of water this morning in the top of the old house yonder."

"It was surely Providence," says the old man, "that sent us here. Dick Halbert is a villain fit for anything, he would have been hanged long ago but for his cowardice. How in the world did he come across you, my Lord?"

"That is a long story which I will tell you again; if you will now allow me, I will go down and rest in your cabin, I feel as if I were fainting from cold."

Old Reil precedes Lord Sydenhault to the cabin, where coals are thrown on the stove, and everything done to make it comfortable, while the two boys busy themselves in putting clean quilts on their father's bed,

and helping their passenger to undress, as he prepares to lie down.

While they are thus employed, Dick Halbert, his son, and two more sailors are pulling in all haste, toward the other side of the little promontory in an open row boat, hidden from the sight of those on board 'Thaniel Reil's cutter by the rock, which in the early morning, had formed their shelter from the storm.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

BY THE BEACON LIGHT.

"I THINK I hear the splash of oars on the other side of the cliff," observed 'Thaniel Reil to his sons as he paced the deck, "just climb up the rock and lie on your face, Haco, ye can see there if it's Dick Halbert. If it be," turning to Hugh, after the boy Haco had begun to climb the rock, "we had better set sail wi' all convenient speed, he's a reckless villain, and if he finds out that he has lost his prisoner, and has any help at hand, we might find it no easy thing to get out of this cove unscathed."

"We can set sail this minute for that," said Hugh, "Jack and me have been putting the cutter in trim since the wind lulled, and the swell is for us if we're going to Jersey."

"In course we're going to Jersey," said the old man, "we're no going home wi' the same cargo we came out wi."

"I daresay no," said Hugh, "unless Lord Sydenhault wants to get home to the old lady; you may be sure father, she has a sore heart every night when she lies down, thinking she's lost him."

"You're right there, Hugh, and if I thought we could get down the Channel wi' this swell, we would na' mind the cargo for once, if we can live wi' 't we can live wanten't. Did ye notice, Hugh, the way the mad Lord

speaks? He speaks just like ony other gentleman; its my thought he's getten his wits again."

"I think that too, father, I would be real glad. Mr. Penryth would get a crook in his nose, I hate him."

Haco had climbed the rock, and now returned almost breathless.

"It's Dick Halbert and his son, father, an' other two lads as ill-looking as Dick himself that was in the boat; they're climbing the cliff up to the old house the noo."

"All hands to work," exclaimed 'Thaniel with a look and gesture of alarm which told the necessity there was for haste more than even his words, "we're ower long here."

"I think we'd better try Jersey," said Hugh, "after all, the swell is clear against us going down the Channel."

"No matter where we go," said the father, "provided we get out into the open sea before Dick finds that his bolts are drawn."

All was in readiness, and in a short time the cutter was "breasting the billows like a thing of life;" poor Arthur, deadly sick with the unwonted motion, lying in the skipper's berth.

Off went the little boat merrily trooping on her way to Jersey, the mariners congratulating themselves they had taken that route, as an hour after they set sail, it was evident there was a storm brewing, and they would have had a hard chance had it met them in the Channel, out of port.

"We'll make for St. Helier's Harbor," said the skipper, this is the tail of last night's blast, an' it's going to blow strong."

It did blow strong enough, tossing the little vessel like

a cockle-shell on the top of the waves; that night there blew a gale in the English Channel such as had not been known for years, sending many a strong ship in pieces to the bottom, down beneath those angry waves; strong brave hearts that had bade good-bye in all hope and faith yesterday, were lying cold and still among the twining sea-weed ere that night fell. The old man and his stout sons stood by their boat bravely; but for the first time in their lives, their hearts quailed with fear, the sea rolling over the deck in great waves as if it would whelm the little vessel, and draw her down, mast and rigging, to the bottom of the Channel.

Three days and nights they strove against the storm. Jersey was left far behind, and now they sought the port of St. Malo, that their little ship might find a haven, where the needful repairs could be made to enable the mariners to take her home. The cutter was terribly battered, but each man on board understood enough of the trade of ship's carpenter to enable them to repair their own vessel.

They were several days at St. Malo before the cutter was again ready to sail, and then, in sunshiny clear weather, and a smooth sea, they set sail for Jersey, thence home.

The night was very dark as the boat made for Sydenhault Harbor, but the wind was in their favor and the sea smooth as glass, the little billows only making rippling music as they struck against the ship's sides on her way to shore.

Lord Sydenhault walked the deck with a light and springy step he had not known for years, as the beacon light in Sydenhault Harbor came in view. The moon

which would be high in the heavens at eleven was already beginning to disperse the darkness of the night, and 'Thaniel Reil kept his boat out in the bay until her light would enable them to see the objects on their way, lest coming in contact with the steamer, which he knew would be in by midnight, or with other larger ships, he should meet with injury to his own vessel, or they themselves, do damage to smaller craft.

Arthur glanced back over the time which had elapsed since he left Sydenhault nearly six years before. His memory did not fail him now, he recollected well the busy quay, partly lighted up by the moon, partly by the light which always hung there, aided by those attached to his mother's carriage. He remembered also the face of the tall lad to whom he had taken such a fancy, and the rude words of his brother as he reproved Brown in such cutting terms. He remembered the dreary sail up to London, the drizzling rainy weather, and how his mother tried to rouse him from the corner of the saloon where he would fain have sat from morn till night.

He well remembered also his brother coming and forcing him to take a large quantity of his medicine at a time his mother was not present. He remembered many subsequent occasions when this horrible medicine was forced on him by the same hand, and he now thanked God for the repugnance which had been given him to it, making him strive on every possible occasion to deceive Brown as to his having taking it, sending him trifling messages, et cetera, so that he might have an opportunity instead of swallowing, to throw it from the window, and his soul rose with gratitude to God as he thought of

his mother's restoration to sight. Then came the wanderings on the Continent, in search of that fair face, which even now that he had entirely despaired of ever seeing it again, was present in all his dreams, in nearly all his waking thoughts.

His life in the Tower had taught him how forgetful he had been of the many mercies around him, how ungrateful to God who had given him back his senses, and placed him in a station of life giving him the means of making happiness to himself by bestowing it on others. He was now forming plans for doing good to those who were his dependants over the wide tract of country which, by the pale light of the rising moon beginning to outline forth the headlands and heights of Sebert forest, he could see lying along the shore as far as his eye could reach.

Arthur determined that the good done him by 'Thaniel Reil and his sons should not only be repaid to the family themselves a hundred fold, but should also come down in blessings both public and private on all in Sydenhault Oaks. For the long years which had been wrested from him, passed in listless idleness and weariness, he would now seek strength of God to live a doubly active life in the cause of his fellow-men.

The cutter is nearing the Harbor, a rush and beating sound on the waters told them that the steam vessel is bearing down on their track. It is sweeping past them with its long trail of white foam behind it. The sailors are calling out to 'Thaniel Reil and his sons with hearty good will, welcoming them home again, telling them in short sentences there had been weeping and woe in Sydenhault Oaks for their supposed loss in the storm al-

most a fortnight past. There are cheery reponses from the cutter, and then the stately steamship is off out of hearing, making her way with rapid strokes towards the quay.

Haco is on deck, and his glass in requisition.

"That glass has been a useful glass to me, Haco," said Lord Sydenhault, "I think the least I can do is to give you the finest one that can be got in London, and have it mounted in gold, and put one in my own armorial bearings."

Haco laughed, a light boyish laugh, "I don't know that the gold mounting would make much odds," said the lad, "but I should like a good glass better than anything else in Lunnun town. Oh! my, how clear you see the barrels on the wharf, and the people coming down to meet the folk from the steamer!"

Haco was leaning on the bulwark of the little vessel, Lord Sydenhault beside him, amused at the delight the boy expressed as each familiar object came in view.

"An' there's Scanton's shop wide open, he used to have it open when the steamer started at twelve, and now he keeps it open to catch the custom as folks land. "He'll no get much custom from the travellers to-night," said the boy after a pause, "I did'na see but two passengers as the steamer passed us."

He was now occupied in rubbing the lenses of his glass and adjusting it for another peep.

"Would you like to get a look, my Lord?" said Haco, after he had completed his arrangement for putting the glass in good order, holding it out for Lord Sydenhault's use as he spoke.

"No my boy," was the reply, "you enjoy looking through it far more than I should. I am sorry to say there is little likelihood of any one being on the pier whom I should recognize. If I live for another year I hope to be able to know the face, and tell the name of every man and woman in Sydenhault Oaks."

The glass is again at the boy's eye, and he calls out to his father who is close by,

"Father, there's Mrs. Sydney, and her old lass Susan, come down to the wharf, they're sitting on the seat under the beacon light — look, father."

"Look yoursel' my man, you're better pleased wi' seeing Mrs. Sydney an' the old lass than I wad be."

There was a light wind springing up, giving an impetus to the sails of the cutter, and quickening its speed as it entered the Harbor.

The boy was laughing heartily at the tricks the wind was playing with the shawls and skirts of the two women sitting under the lamp-post.

"Oh golly!" cried he, "Mrs. Sydney's bonnet's off, and Susan's running after it, she'll be into the sea as sure as I'm here,— no, she catch'd it," and the boy in a fit of laughter took the glass from his eyes.

Arthur held out his hand for the glass, and turned it in the direction of the lamp-post where a woman, could now be clearly seen by the naked eye, as she stood with her figure in full relief under the light. She had retreated behind the seat, which was a rough plank or two, with one raised a little to form a kind of back, and standing close to this she could keep her skirts in their proper

place, while she endeavored with both hands to prevent her hair from flying about with the wind.

Lord Sydenhault trembled from head to foot as he gazed through the glass on the figure of Mrs. Sydney; he strained his eyes to their utmost power. Nearer and nearer the boat came to land, every motion of the hands and arms as they shewed the figure, every time they were raised in vain endeavors to keep the fair hair in order, seemed to tell him with double force, that he had known and loved that face in the long ago.

The steam vessel has her gangway on the quay, the people are coming out. One tall man enveloped in a fur coat and cap goes directly with quick step to the lady who is still struggling with the wind, they embrace each other, the servant returns without the bonnet, it had a second time escaped from her grasp, and was sailing up and down in the water of the Harbor. The man in the fur coat is vainly trying to fold the shawl round the lady's head, the wind seems determined that this shall not be; the loss of the bonnet is evidently no great hardship, they are laughing and talking merrily.

The cutter is close by the pier, Arthur drops the glass from his eye.

"Oh God!" said he, "can it be possible that this is she, or is it one of those fancied resemblances that a nearer view will make fade away?"—his heart is sorely troubled.

"What did you say was that lady's name?" he inquired of Haco.

"It's Mistress Sydney, and that's her servant lass," replied Haco.

"And that man is her husband?" says Arthur, inquiringly.

"No, he's no that, he's her son; he was only a schoolmaster when he was here, but he's a great painter now, and they say he can make five thousand pounds in a year, only at painting, but father says that's no true."

"Neither it is," says 'Thaniel, "you'll the finest figure-head that's put on a ship in Lunun town painted for a poun, and the cleverest man living could no paint a thousan' heads in a year, let alone five thousan'."

The last words sound but faintly in Lord Sydenhault's ear as he jumps from the bulwark of the ship on to the quay.

"Lord guide us!" says 'Thaniel Reil in a subdued voice, as he looks at the rash action, "did ever you see a landsman do the like o' that afore? I hope the poor lad's no growing daft again."

Arthur is close beside Mrs. Sydney, loo down into her face, his hat off, his dark hair blown back by the wind, his hand on her shoulder, she is looking up into his face, her heart is beating in wild throbs, he utters one word;

"Louise!"—

Her arms are round his neck as with a joyous cry of "Arthur! Arthur!" she is clasped to his bosom.

For her the dead is alive.— For him the lost is found!

CHAPTER XXXVII.

EDWARD PENRYTH AT BAY.

EDWARD PENRYTH lay for many weeks tossing on a fevered bed, attended by the first medical men from St. Helier, who all declared his sickness to be gastric fever, and that perfect rest, quiet and good nursing, in addition, of course, to their own skill, were absolutely necessary to give him the smallest chance of a return to life; warning his wife that the least agitation would again bring on the convulsive fits which had so alarmed her on the morning of his arrival.

When she emptied his pockets, before giving his clothes to her servant that the dust acquired while he was struggling on the floor might be brushed off, she found that this man who pretended to be so poor, had ten fifty pound Bank of England notes in his pocket-book.

The poor woman felt her heart grow chill as she looked on those evidences of the little affection the man could have felt either for herself or for his children. She sat down on a low seat by his bed, the pocket-book, the evidence of her husband's falsehood, in her hand; sat down to think of their first meeting, his first declaration of love, how he had won her heart, as much by the polish of his manners as by his handsome face and form, and how, while professing an undying love, he had lived in luxury all those long years, condemning her to hard work

and poverty, increasing year by year, until it amounted at last almost to penury.

The time however came at last when Edward Penryth was able to sit up in his chair,— walk into another room warmly wrapped up, go out into the street, and feel the cool, strengthening breath of Heaven again blowing around him, giving life and health.

Warned by his physician, he had carefully avoided the subject which brought him to Jersey, and his wife was too glad to have the evil day she feared was coming upon herself and her children, put off, ever to make the least allusion to it.

When the physicians allowed her to give him the letters, which had come for him during his illness, he looked at both, tore open the one with the oldest post-mark, it contained another directed to "William Grey, Esquire, Solicitor, Lincoln's Inn Fields."

This torn open, disclosed yet another addressed in a hand unmistakeably little accustomed to writing, the superscription of which was as follows:

"For the Captain Tom Holling, Skipper, Wapping, London; to be left at Mr. Higgins', ship chandler, and by him to be sent on."

On opening this precious missive, the spelling was found to be as atrociously bad as the writing was difficult to decipher. It contained these words:

"Sur master Tom Holling, i ave fund a good many bits o' paper cut out o' newspapers ofring me a reward for bringin hom Archer Penrith, he yure creezy breether as yu guv me to kip, to the Cuntes o' Sideno, i'm to git one hunder towsan pund for im if yull tak im bac cn' relev me

o' im ill do it to yu for fiv towsan if yu wont ill giv im to the old laddy, yur most obedent umble servan

Dick Halbert."

Edward Penryth, with trembling hands, tore the dirty looking missive in pieces, and opening the next, which he knew was from the same person, found that it contained these words:

"*i sent yu my letter o' turms yisturda, but praps yull not git it so ill kip im jist* 1 *month, not a da lonur if you want im cume for im before that tim and if yu dont cum i'll tek im to the old laddy, ive warn yu i'm quits wi yu, yur most obedent umble servan*

Dick Halbert."

This news was agitating enough, and would certainly have brought on the catastrophe the doctors feared, had it come a few days sooner. Edward Penryth's month of probation was not yet out. He must try and coax the man to keep him for a month or two longer, until his own strength should come again, and then he would take him where English advertisements could not reach his keeper.

"If I had only been wise enough to do this at once," he exclaimed, "I should have saved the five thousand pounds I must give as hush money to this unhanged villain."

He knew that in a day or two a steamer would touch at Jersey and Guernsey both; by taking a passage in it he could see Dick Halbert at once, and so have this affair left in abeyance for at least a month or two, thus leaving him at liberty to return and arrange for the departure of his family.

He was fortunate in finding the steamer at once on his arrival at St. Helier, and, on his landing at Guernsey, engaged a caleche, which he himself drove across the country to Dick Halbert's castle, as that worthy called the old Tower.

As he drew near the Tower he found Dick Halbert himself standing outside, attracted by the sound of wheels, a very unusual thing in the solitary place where he dwelt; and Dick, to his horror, beheld his friend Tom Holling, who, as he supposed, aware of his brother's flight, had come in revenge to do some deadly harm to Dick himself.

"It is not my fault," he called aloud, as he retreated within the shelter of the doorway, and looking back to see if his wife was within hearing, knowing that with her help he could manage to defend himself, perhaps inflict chastisement upon his opponent; "It is not my fault that your crazy brother ran off, I could'nt help it, the bars being old and rusty and falling to pieces with his mad battering inside; you can go up-stairs for yourself and see."

Dick had managed matters so that the bars were both lying on the ground with broken hasps, as if the door had been shattered from the inside.

"He most killed my wife, and I think killed himself too; you did'nt hear of him, did you?"

Dick entertained a lingering hope that the man might have fallen over the crags and been drowned, as he had never heard anything of him afterwards.

"He did, he most killed me," said the woman, coming forward to corroborate her husband's words, "beating my

head with a bottle he had in his hand, he was either mad drunk, or a madman at any rate."

Edward Penryth was bewildered with their words, to which he could attach no meaning.

"What do you say?" cried he, "I don't understand you, I came here in answer to your two letters in which you demand five thousand pounds because of a hoax you saw in the papers; if you could read, you would not be so easily deceived by what other people tell you; Penryth is not my brother's name nor mine either, Holling is our name; where is he?"

Dick Halbert was sharp enough to gain from what the would-be Tom Holling said, that he had heard nothing of the flight of his brother, and he determined to make the most he could of this ignorance.

"I've nothing to tell you at all about him," said he, "only that he broke open the old bolts of the door one dark night, and came down here and drank the remains of a bottle of brandy that I had taken a sup of before going to my bed, and he took the catch of this, knowing I was sound asleep, and nearly broke my wife's head with the bottle afore he rushed out of the door, and according to my reckoning over the rocks into the sea; for I have wandered about every day searching for him between this and that, and he's not on the island, and nobody has ever seen him."

"How long ago is this?"

"It is just eight days to-day since he ran off."

"How can this be?" said Edward Penryth, "you must have been in London then writing those letters."

"I did'nt go to London; I only went to Sark, where

the friend lives that wrote them both, the one at night, the other in the morning, putting London on them, and promising to give them, first one and then the other, to Higgins at Wapping, the which he did as he told me yesterday when I was over to Sark."

There was now only one course for Edward Penryth to pursue; he did not know how much of their story to believe; that his brother had escaped was evidently a fact; but his drinking part of a bottle or even one glass of brandy, and afterwards beating the woman's head with the bottle, was so contrary to his character, that he did, not believe one word of it; and yet both man and woman told the same story without hesitation. On the other hand, his brother could not be on the island, or the man would have found some trace of him; he was an active fellow, with his wife and son to assist him; it was manifestly his interest to find and bring back the fugitive if such were possible.

Arthur had been subjected for many years to the action of a medicine which had the power to sap all his thinking faculties; the lonely life he had led for months, up in that great Tower, where he could see nothing but bare walls, might have entirely crazed him. This would at once account for his drinking the brandy, and under its influence, rushing down those perpendicular rocks into the sea. Edward Penryth wished in his heart that this solution of the mystery might prove to be the true one.

At all events his first steps must be directed to London; if his brother were alive, he would be with his mother in the Villa at Bayswater, or if not there, the old housekeeper would be aware of his having been found.

In two days Edward Penryth was at the Club in Pall Mall, from whence, by inquiries carefully instituted among his mother's agents, he found to his great satisfaction that no trace whatever of Arthur had been discovered, that his mother was alone in Sydenhault Villa. That, every waking hour, she was employed in devising and executing plans by which she hoped to accomplish the recovery of her son; that she had only left Brest, when after months spent in a fruitless search, she had been persuaded to return to her own land by the advice of friends, who proved to her that it was most likely her son was concealed in London, perhaps in some of the private asylums there. Her own knowledge of his brother's character, the medicine he had been taking under that brother's supervision, the likeness which struck her in the tall sailor of Brest to her son Edward, all conspired to assure her that the most likely place in which she would find her lost son, was an insane asylum.

In order to obtain entrance into these, and have a scrutinizing search made in her own immediate presence, she had enlisted the good will and authority of every friend she could bring to her aid, chief among these, was Lord Seymore. He knew her son Edward's real character, as she did not; he had carefully inquired into the circumstances that had occurred at Brest, had heard surmises that one of the men who carried off Lord Sydenhault was his own brother; all the events tending to give him deep sympathy for the poor lady, so distressed and lonely in her old age.

Lord Seymore not only succeeded in finding entrance to the private asylums for Lady Sydenhault, but accom-

panied her himself; he was unwilling to return to his residence in the Tower during the winter, and had therefore obtained permission for another to discharge his duties, until his health was re-established, he was therefore at liberty to indulge himself in devoting his time to help his old friend, and Lady Sydenhault looked as naturally for Lord Seymore to accompany her each day, as she did for her carriage to appear at the appointed hour.

The advertisements which Arthur had seen in the papers from Brest, were inserted regularly in others through Britain and France. All that labor, money or power could do, was enlisted in the cause of finding him.

"It is my own;" the Countess would frequently say to herself, as she sat communing with her soul on the course she was taking; "my life, my time, and the money I spend are all my own; if Arthur is never found, Edward may have his father's estate, and he may assume the Sydenhault title if he will, but while I live I shall never cease searching for my eldest born; if it is necessary I shall spend the last farthing of the Sydenhault gold, sell the last rood of the Sydenhault land, that I may find my beloved child, living or dead."

Mr. Penryth heard of all these expensive proceedings of her Ladyship's, read the advertisements day by day at the Club, and he ground his teeth at the needless waste he was helpless to prevent.

Edward Penryth had been several days at Sydenhault Villa; he was more attentive to his mother than he had formerly been, hoping in this way to wean her from the search which employed her day by day; when the even-

ing came, and she sat tired and disappointed in her spacious drawing-room, Edward would strive to wean her mind to the topics of the day, read aloud from the public prints, and otherwise endeavor to amuse her. But it was in vain, she could not separate him in her thoughts from the tall sailor; the hair brush she had seen in Johnston's hand would speak to her, with its silent voice, coming between her ear and every word her son spoke or read.

Edward Penryth saw that his mother's mind and thoughts were far away, that his words as they fell on her ear left no trace; he could even detect a grave suspicious glance in her eye, at times, when looking upon him standing upright, or leaning against the mantlepiece, he assumed the slouching look of the sailor at Brest.

It was a hard strait for the poor mother; one son gone, perhaps for ever, the other, in her heart of hearts, to stand accused as the destroyer of his brother.

Edward Penryth had made up his mind to talk of his seat in the house of Lords; if he did not succeed at once it would pave the way for another conversation on the same subject, there was no use playing with it any longer, he himself believed firmly that Arthur was among the dead, lying in the sea by the Channel Islands. It was too bad that he, who was now the only representative of the family, should be kept away from what he had coveted so long. It was the last evening he would be with his mother perhaps for weeks; there was work for him to do which had been left too long; the woman in Jersey whom he had once so loved, must be got rid of, she and her children hung like a burden round his neck, and he

said in his heart, "Would that they all, mother and children, were keeping Arthur company in the Channel!"

He must start on the morrow for Jersey, his plans were laid. His family were to be sent where tidings of them should never cross his path, he would yet be able to convince Lord Seymore that Mr. Marchmont was a man resembling him, nothing more.

He spoke to his mother of the seat in the Peers. She allowed him to go on, and yet she blamed herself for doing so; it was utterly abhorrent to her to hear him talk so coolly of superseding his brother, perhaps the more so, because now she began to fear she should never look upon Arthur's face again.

Edward Penryth had been talking for fully ten minutes on this subject, so distasteful to his mother; for the last five he fancied he was convincing her; she had not said one impatient word, given one impatient look; he felt sure he was bringing her over to his own view of the question. He was standing by the corner of the mantlepiece, a candelebrum above his head, lighting up his person against the dark green and gold velvet hangings which surrounded the room, her Ladyship's eyes were fixed upon his face and figure, taking in the little picture it made with the light above, and the heavy dark green curtain behind, the conviction that she saw before her the tall sailor of Brest was as strong as if she had opened the Evangel and seen it written there; be it for weal or for woe she must speak out what she believes to be the truth.

"Edward," said she, in a strong clear voice, so different from the subdued tones she had ever used since she had

lost her son, that Edward Penryth started at the sound; this action of his making assurance doubly sure, brought her back to Brest, and the moment in which the tall sailor had started when he caught her eye fixed upon him; "Edward," said she, repeating the word twice, "as sure as there is a God in Heaven, so surely do I believe that the sailor of Brest who carried your brother off, and you yourself are one!"

"Mother!" exclaimed he in an indignant voice, drawing himself up to his full height, "How dare you accuse me of such a crime? I will not suffer this, even from you, these are things not to be borne."—

He advanced towards her with blazing eyes, she feels as if the next moment she may be stricken dead — her hand is on the bell-rope — the bell is loudly rung,— while another peal at the outer door answers to its summons. A rush of feet in the hall — men and women's voices mingling together — the drawing-room door is thrown open — they are surrounding her ladyship, one of them clasping her in his arms!

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

TOM HOLLING.

LORD SYDENHAULT, his long lost wife and child are within his mother's Villa at Bayswater. The carriage stops, and through the parted curtains of the drawing-room windows, Arthur Penryth sees a sight which arouses a fierceness in his heart never before felt. It is he who rings the bell with such mad fury, he who rushes into the drawing-room and seizes the arm of his brother, Edward Penryth, who holds his mother with an iron grasp, while she, in wild affright, is pulling the bell-rope.

In a moment, Lady Sydenhault is enclosed in Arthur's protecting arms; Edward's hand is laid heavily on his brother's shoulder while the word "Idiot!" comes from his lips, uttered more from habit than from anything else, as his astonished eye falls on the man, who, a moment before, he believed to be lying under the waters of the deep sea.

Lord Sydenhault turns upon his brother with fierce, yet warning look.

"Stand back, Tom Holling! I know you well. Thank God my brain has escaped your medicine, my body your bullies."

"Dear Arthur," exclaimed his mother, "I had begun

to fear you would never come back again; where have you been? where did they take you to?"

"I will tell you all another time, dear mother," said her son, "but now let me show you my dear wife, she for whom we searched so vainly on the Continent, when all the while she was living quietly at Sydenhault Oaks."

Lady Sydenhault, (we must call her so now), had thrown off her bonnet and cloak that her mother-in-law might be the better able to see her face, her pale brown hair braided smoothly across her forehead, and fastened in a broad Grecian coil round her head, shewing off to advantage the clear cut features, beautiful eyes, and still fine complexion of the handsome woman.

The elder Countess exclaimed as she embraced her daughter-in-law: "This is indeed being twice blessed, to find both a son and a daughter in one hour."

"I have another son to show you, dear mother."

"Not now, not now," cried his mother with a terrified look. She had been unconscious of the words which had passed between the brothers, or that the scene which had occurred in the drawing-room a few minutes before, had been seen through the open window. She fancied that Arthur in his old kind way, was bringing Edward forward, lest he should suffer from jealousy; which they knew he had indulged in from boyhood. "You know not all, dear Arthur, you do not know what I have suffered for days past, and what your appearance at the right moment saved me from to-night; let Edward leave me now, I will see him to-morrow."

"I do not speak of Edward," said Lord Sydenhault, "but of your grandson, my darling Herbert; the little

boy the report of whose death we found had been so carefully circulated at Brest, and to whose memory I intended to have raised a white cross. There he is," said he, putting his hand on Herbert's arm as he drew him gently towards his mother, "there he is, a great fellow, two inches taller than his father, and one who unaided and poor has won himself a name honored through all Europe. You know those beautiful engravings of the 'Pictures of the Spring Tide' that we bought abroad to have framed for your boudoir; this," said he with his hand on his son's shoulder, "is Herbert Sydney, the painter of 'The Spring Tide' pictures. I think he must keep his honored name of Sydney, until you and I are both dead, and he assumes that of Lord Sydenhault."

The draught of joy was too great, the reaction too sudden, the Countess sank weeping in her chair.

"Oh! this is too much happiness!" said she, as covering her face with both hands, the happy tears forced themselves down her cheeks, "dear Arthur, for all we have both suffered, this is indeed an overpayment of delight."

While this scene was passing, Edward Penryth had retreated with slow steps towards the door, he heard every word that was said, understood it all well, too clearly. All his schemes signally defeated; those false letters he had written to the Continent, when his brother entrusted him with the secret of his marriage, the address of his wife and child,—the money he had spent to get rid of these hated relatives,—the crimes he had committed, the schemes he had so artfully laid, all gone for nothing. The boy, who his hirelings said had died in childhood,

was now standing before him in the glory of his strong manhood; the one whom he most hated, whom he had taken most pains to ruin of any one on all this earth, saving indeed Arthur his only brother.

And to what did all his crimes and schemes amount? They were both there, the brother whom he knew was a brother, and yet would have cheated out of the heritage and senses which God had given him; and the man whom he knew not, was of his own blood or kin, and whom he would, but that there were powerful arms about and around him, have hunted into poverty, despair and death.

All was futile now, it was useless to strive against the stream which had ended in a gulf so dark and deep. Were Arthur a raving maniac to-morrow, he had a young son, who was a powerful man alike in body and mind.

Edward Penryth could never be Lord Sydenhault; Earl Sydenhault's seat in the House of Peers would be filled ere the year was out, but Edward Penryth would never sit there.

All this seemed written with a pen of fire on his boiling brain. He opened the side door of the drawing-room, sent one scathing look at the group around the fireplace, and going by the conservatory, left his mother's house for ever.

"Ring, Arthur," said the Countess, recovering herself after a few minutes, "and order refreshments to be served in the little drawing-room."

"And I, meanwhile," said Herbert Penryth, "must take my way to the Tower. You remember," addressing his father with a significant smile, "how I told you the

traveller of the Black Forest had promised Lord Seymore that his first visit in London should be made to him! I cannot keep the whole of my word, but I must try to keep part of it; if Lady Sydenhault will excuse me, I will go now, late as it is, to visit Lord Seymore."

"He is within a few hundred yards of us," said Lady Sydenhault, "and has been with me every day since his return to London, helping me in my vain attempts to discover where your father had been carried off to, I have only to write a few lines to him, and he will join us here."

"My dear mother," said Arthur, "you must allow Herbert to go, there is another besides Lord Seymore whom my son wishes to see, one whom it would not be quite etiquette to expect under all circumstances to visit here." Lord Sydenhault added a few words, that although spoken in his ordinary tone of voice, were meant only for his mother's ear.

"Oh! I understand," replied she, with a pleased smile as she cast an admiring look on her handsome grandson, "this is better a thousand times than it would have been had all gone according to my wishes a few years ago. Truly hath the wise man said, 'Man proposes, God disposes!"

Lady Sydenhault put her hand across her eyes as if thinking for a second or two, and spoke as if she were answering a question she had been putting to herself.

"Yes, Arthur, order the coach to be brought to the door, we will all go to visit Lord Seymore and his beautiful daughter."

This proposal met with the approval of everyone, and

while the carriage was being brought to the door, Lord Sydenhault gave his mother a short detail of the engagement between his son and Ruby, and the struggles the boy had made to win his love.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE TRAVELLER OF THE BLACK FOREST.

LORD SEYMORE and his daughter were seated in their drawing-room talking for the twentieth time over their exciting chase through the Black Forest, as "The Lady Miria, Countess Sydenhault, and Lord and Lady Sydenhault" were announced; Herbert Penryth keeping behind, wrapped in the fur coat and cap he had worn the last time he saw Lord Seymore and Ruby.

Lord Seymore's congratulations to her Ladyship on the recovery of her son, made doubly valuable by the discovery at the same time of his lost wife, were long and hearty. Ruby also added hers in the quiet, graceful way in which all words of kindness flowed from her lips.

When presented to Lady Sydenhault, she gazed at her in unfeigned surprise; could it be possible she asked herself, that this lady was Mrs. Sydney or only one so like her as to deceive the closest scrutiny? Her surprise was such as to deprive her for an instant of the power of replying to the introduction given by the Countess Sydenhault to her daughter-in-law.

Recovering herself quickly, she made the usual acknowledgements, adding:

"You are so exactly like a friend of mine in Sydenhault Oaks that I could almost fancy she stood before me."

"Perhaps I am the one to whom yon allude," replied Lady Sydenhault; "the last time I saw Miss Seymore she brought me a handful of lilies for my son who used to be her tutor, and was then called Herbert Sydney."

"The traveller of the Black Forest!" exclaimed Lord Seymore in hearty, almost joyous tones, attracting the attention of all in the room, as he went with quick step towards the door to meet the fur clad figure which now entered. Holding out both his hands, he took those of the traveller in his own, saying: "Welcome, a thousand times! the most welcome guest in any house of mine, this is indeed joy upon joy to see you here, and at such a time. Lady Miria Sydenhault, Lord and Lady Sydenhault," turning to the Countess, "this is the brave man who saved both my child's life and my own in the Black Forest, who risked his own life twice in one night to save Ruby. Come, Ruby, and tell our dear and honored guest he is a thousand times welcome."

"You must allow me," said Herbert Penryth, now speaking for the first time, "to take off these cumbrous wraps of mine; this is hardly a guise in which to appear in the presence of Miss Seymore."

Lord Seymore helped the traveller to pull off his fur coat; that and the fur cap were scarcely in the hands of the servant who carried them away, when Lord Seymore stood in mute astonishment, gazing on the painter of the 'Spring Tide' pictures!

"What!" said Lord Seymore, but he was stopped in his exclamation whatever it was to be, by the Countess, who, coming forward, said:

"Lord Seymore, allow me to introduce you to my grandson, Herbert Penryth, the only child of my son, Arthur, Lord Sydenhault."

"Herbert Penryth!" repeated Lord Seymore, in subdued tones fraught with amazement, "I scarcely know what to say. I hoped to have found a man at least poor in this world's goods, to whom I could render some recompense for having saved my own life, and that of one a thousand times dearer to me than myself; and I have found a man who the world says has, by his talent, made himself almost fabulously rich, and whose birth is equal to my own. I do not know whether I am more pleased or pained at the discovery, which tells me that it is not in my power, by any act of mine, to show the gratitude which fills my heart."

"You have already in your attention to my grandmother, and your endeavors to aid her in the search for my father, repaid me a thousand fold. But I come this night to ask the reward for which I have striven all these long years, for which I struggled with poverty, strove to mount the ladder of fame, visited foreign lands and made myself a name; and this reward only you can give."

"Name it, my boy," exclaimed Lord Seymore, who knew well to what Herbert Penryth's words were tending. His thoughts, for an instant, went back to the old bugbear of his life 'The Schoolmaster,' as he added, "you cannot ask anything, not even the castle and land by right of which I bear my name, that I would not cheerfully give, were it in my power to do so."

"I have a richer boon to ask my Lord than your lands and castle, the old heritage of the Saxon kings though

they be," replied Herbert Penryth, with all the dignity of his name and race, "I come to ask permission from you to woo your daughter."

The Baron replied not, but taking the young man's hand, led him towards the sofa where Ruby stood by the side of Lady Sydenhault and her daughter-in-law.

"Ruby," said her father, with a brighter look than she had ever before seen on his face, "will you be introduced to this young man? Will you shake hands with him, and welcome to your father's house, the traveller of the Black Forest?"

CHAPTER XL.

"And there were ladies bright and fair,
In silks and jewels fine,
The bride wi' but her golden hair
Did aw the rest outshine."—*Old Ballad.*

THE sweet Spring time is round again, and there is a happy wedding in the Parish Church of Sydenhault Oaks; outside and inside, the little Church is decorated with flowers, green boughs and flags. The altar rails and font are loaded with roses, rich in their pink and crimson bloom, while here and there shines the calla lily with its great white velvet-like petals, dark green leaves and rich perfume. The whole place is gorgeous with flower-beauty, the air laden with fragrance. From an early hour, the Church is filled with the village folk,—country folk from the farthest off farms on the Sydenhault land,—and fisher-folk from the sea braes of Sydenhault Oaks;—conspicious among whom are 'Thaniel Reil and his wife, Hugh and Haco, all the boys, and even the two little maidens of six and seven years, who used to bring morning offerings of sea pinks to Ruby's bedside in their father's cottage.

They are both there, Ruth and Annie, in the embroidered frocks and pink sashes Ruby brought them from France. Their little heads covered with a mass of short golden curls, their blue eyes sparkling, and their roseleaf cheeks crimson with excitement. Their mother lets

them stand on the seat, that they may see the 'Bonnie Bride' whom they remember so well. Annie has a great posie of primroses and wild violets which she has spent the whole morning in gathering, and says she is going to give to Miss Seymore. Even before the bride appears, the bunch of primroses is lifted up as high as Annie's fat little bare arm can stretch above her head, in hopes Miss Seymore will see it, and if she does, Annie has full faith she will call the little gatherer to her side.

The old Countess in purple velvet, is the first to appear, the stately old lady who even in her blindness never forgot the step and air of a Countess. She is leaning on the arm of the son who to her is the dearest and best. Lady Sydenhault comes next in gold coloured satin and costly black lace. She is led by Lord St. John, a near relation of the family just returned from India in time to be present at the bridal of the future Earl and Countess of Sydenhault. Next come a crowd of noble Lords and Ladies; the Ladies beautiful and richly dressed in silk and velvet, and ancient lace. The four bride's maidens in pale sea green silk, covered with tulle of the same sea green in waves and clouds that look like the foam and sheen of the sea, garlanded with wreaths of pink coral, their tiny bonnets of the same sea green tulle, adorned by wreaths of red and pink coral.

The organ touched by a master hand, is pealing forth in loud triumphal notes the glorious strains of the Wedding March, as the bride followed by her bride's maidens, is led by Lord Seymore to the altar. She is robed in plain white silk, her white lace veil falling in cloud-like folds to her feet. Ruby wears neither sparkling diamond

nor costly pearl, no ornament save her golden hair! The contrast of the beautiful, simply dressed young girl coming after the bright colours, and gorgeous dresses worn by the ladies who preceded her, is so great that 'Thaniel Reil, overcome by surprise and admiration, involuntarily lifts both his hands, while he says to his wife, almost audibly: "The Queen of Sheba!"

The old clergyman who baptized Ruby is the one to give her to Herbert Penryth, and wish them both good speed in the name of the Lord.

The bride and bridegroom are in the carriage which is to take them on their way to the Continent, the crowd of ladies and gentlemen who accompany them are still saying some last words, when suddenly Annie Reil rushes through their midst holding her bunch of primroses above her head. In a moment she is inside the carriage, panting with the excitement of running off from her mother; the child is breathless and can only press her flowers into Ruby's hand.

"Annie, my little pet, a thousand thanks for your beautiful flowers," Ruby says, as she bends over the child and kisses the sweet red lips, giving her bridal bouquet of orange blossoms and roses to the child in exchange for the primroses and violets. which are destined to be kept among Ruby's treasured things. The adieux are said,— the carriage drives off,— they are gone.

CHAPTER XLI.

WHILE THE WAVES COME IN.

"Those sturdy sons are the fisher's pride,
Their love his staff in life,
Rich with a sailor's wondrous lore
Of sea born dangers and strife!"

I. Ascher.

A FEW hours after Ruby's marriage, 'Thaniel Reil and his wife sit in their bright well-ordered kitchen. Their dinner is over, the plates and dishes ranged in order on the dresser shelves, a clear coal fire in the ample grate, the door wide open as is their wont whenever the weather permits it to be so. They are still in their holiday attire, the two little girls examining for the hundreth time Ruby's bridal bouquet which Mrs. Reil has carefully put into water. The Dutch clock, a present from Ruby, is striking the hour, and four puppet soldiers come from a little cupboard under the face of the clock that with loud and mimic sound of trumpet, cymbal and drum they may announce the hour, while they strut and dance to the tune of "Cheer, Boys, Cheer." A wondrous cuckoo, with red tail and head, starts out above, fluttering his green wings and proclaiming his name, "cuckoo, cuckoo," in the usual shrill notes of the wooden bird of that ilk. Ever since the advent of the cuckoo clock in the fisherman's cottage, the young men,

boys and little maidens, all of them who are within the house, regularly as the clock gives warning of the hour, from six in the morning until eight at night, range themselves in front of it, with upturned eager faces watching for the music of the soldiers — the call of the cuckoo.

The strutting and music of the soldiers, the call of the cuckoo have a fascination for older folks. 'Thaniel never fails as the clock begins to strike the hour to push his chair into a position from which he can see distinctly every motion of the soldiers, hear each note of "Cheer Boys Cheer," mark every flutter of the cuckoo's wings, each shrill cry of "cuckoo, cuckoo," while Mrs. Reil laying her hands with her knitting on her lap follows the example of her lord and master.

They are thus occupied now,— the soldiers have strutted, played and danced, have been applauded and wondered at for the hundreth time, have made their exit, and the pert cuckoo is master of the field, the centre of attraction. Haco hears the sound of wheels, runs to the door and returns hastily to say that "The Sydenhault carriage with Lady Sydenhault and the mad Lord and Mrs. Sydney, is almost at the door."

'Thaniel has just begun to reprove Haco for "calling folk, gentle or simple, out o' their names," when, first the long shadows, and then the ladies, and Lord Sydenhault themselves, are inside the cottage door.

Lord Sydenhault shakes hands heartily with Nathaniel and the boys who were on board the cutter, talks of his escape and the voyage home, and then shakes hands with Mrs. Reil, (who has been dusting seats, that their distinguished visitors may sit down.)

The surprise of seeing such distinguished visitors in their humble abode has almost deprived the whole family of the power of speech, the children stand open-mouthed, staring at the grand ladies, the boys draw back wishing they were near the door, Mrs. Reil hides her confusion by dusting chairs that are always kept speckless.

'Thaniel is the first to recover his self-possession, and uses it to request the ladies to walk into the room, opening the door of the adjoining apartment as he speaks. His words act like an electric shock on his wife who knows that the room has not been 'tidied up' since it was used as a dressing-room for herself and the little girls in the morning; and that her own print dress and petticoat still hang from the brass nails on the door, the children's clothes festoon the chairs, their shoes and stockings adorn the floor. She is about to rush to the door that she may prevent 'Thaniel from opening it, utterly unable to think what apology she will make for such a proceeding, when to her unspeakable relief, both ladies request almost simultaneously to be allowed to remain in the nice large comfortable kitchen, where everything looks and smells so fresh and sweet. The reference to sweet smells reminds Annie of her beautiful bouquet, and emboldens her to present it to each of the visitors in succession that they may inhale its perfume.

For the moment, Annie is the centre of attraction, and seems to feel in duty bound to provide amusement for their illustrious guests. For this purpose she seizes upon Neptune's collar endeavouring to drag him from under the table where he is enjoying his sleep. "Come out, Nep, come, poor boy, and see Lady— Lady Seymore."

Annie cannot recollect Sydenhault, the word is too long and hard, but Seymore is a household word, one she has heard from infancy and fancies it is exactly the same, which name she uses.

"What a magnificent dog," Lord Sydenhault says, as the great curly black fellow shakes himself up from his slumbers, almost moving the table as he rises from under it."

"Aye, he's a big dog, an what's better he's a wise one. He's been the means o' saving one life at any rate," replies 'Thaniel who has now recovered his self-possession, Annie's "boldness" as her mother mentally terms it having set the whole family at their ease.

"You brought him from Newfoundland, I suppose?" asks Lord Sydenhault, inquiringly, still speaking to 'Thaniel.

"No, I did no bring him, but Hugh did, and he gave him to Miss Seymore, and she left him here when she went to Jersey."

"To Jersey?" exclaims the Countess in some surprise and immediately adds: "you mean when she went to the continent with Lord Seymore, upon his recovery."

"No, I dun no mean that," 'Thaniel says hesitatingly. He sees he has made a mistake, and yet he is too honest to let his words be mistaken for other than they really are, "Miss Seymore goed to Jersey afore that;" he is interrupted by Hugh who comes to the rescue with,

"It was me that gae the dog to Miss Seymore afore she went to school in London town, an she left him wi us one time at she was down here; he's a pure breed Newfoundland, if your Lordship would like one like him

I daresay I could get one?" Hugh makes the offer, and goes on speaking, merely to keep his father quiet, and the old man feels grateful for the boy's interference, they are all, father, mother, and boys, refined enough to know that the cause of Ruby's visit to Jersey ought to be hidden from Edward Penryth's mother. They judge rightly when they think Lord Sydenhault knows it, and is more anxious than they to conceal it from the Countess.

While Hugh speaks, 'Thaniel is occupied in taking out from his pocket and thrusting in again, a large gold repeater, which, with its massive chain and seals, on one of which is engraved a spy-glass and on the other a cutter, is a present from Lord Sydenhault who has paid more than one visit to the cottage, since 'Thaniel and his boys made him a free man again. 'Thaniel's action, by which he involuntarily covers his confusion, seems infectious. Mrs. Reil and the boys are each in their own way, fingering the watches they have all been presented with by the same liberal hand.

Annie is on the alert, her mother's watch is newer and prettier than Nep, she is sure. Lady Sydenhault, whom Annie thinks of as Mrs. Sidney, has seen it, but she is sure the Countess would vastly enjoy the sight, perhaps like to try it on, as she herself often pleads to be allowed to do, so going up to her Ladyship she asks in a rather low tone, with her little face held up to that of the Countess, "Would'nt you like to see mother's watch? Maybe she'll let you try it on."

Annie's "boldness" is proverbial in the household; for the moment it seems unbearable; Haco snatches her up,

carries her out without other remonstrance on the child's part than a silent tear or two. In a few minutes the party inside the cottage see Haco and the child on the boulder beach, looking alternately at the ships in the offing through a spy-glass, the golden mountings of which glitter in the light of the setting sun. It was a promise of this coveted indulgence that made Annie submit to be carried off without the usual remonstrance of kick and scream.

The Countess is speaking to 'Thaniel Reil. "I came here to-day to thank you from my heart of hearts; I only arrived at Sydenhault Hall last night, and now the first hour I could call my own, I come to assure you of my life-long gratitude. The one who restored me to sight conferred upon me a benefit which, vast as it is, and greatly as I appreciate it, fades into a small boon in comparison with what you have done in restoring my son to his country, to his birthright, and to me. You are of course aware that I offered a reward of a hundred thousand pounds to the one who should enable me to discover my son; this money is now placed in Glynn's Bank in your name, and you may draw any or all of it when you please."

As the Countess ceases speaking, the old fisherman gazes in her face with a blank look, as if he does not understand what she means; he seems out at sea, at a loss to know what to make of her words; from the faces of the old man and his boys, a stranger coming suddenly among them would at once think they had received some perplexing and disagreeable news instead of having just been informed that they were entitled to a princely fortune.

At last 'Thaniel speaks, "Ye've made a great mistake, my Lady. We did no go to Guernsey to seek Lord Sydenhault, we had no thought o' him or any ither body, we were driven in by stress o' weather to the cove beneath Dick Halbert's place, an we had no more thought o' seein' Lord Sydenhault there, than o' seein' the man in the moon. I can'no tak ye'er money, my Lady, I can'no tak it for doin what ane o' us never thought about. We've been more than paid already for the little trouble we had. His Lordship's geen us aw, the goodwife and aw, gowd watches and chains the like we never saw, for bye to hae o' our ain, an Haco's gotten a gouden spy-glass, we hae gotten ower much, ower much. Keep your siller, my Lady, we would be the greatest rogues atwain this and Guernsey gin we could handle a poun' o't."

It is now the Countess' turn to feel perplexed; to her it seems the most wonderful thing in the world that poor people like the Reils should refuse the fortune that is within their grasp, and which, even if it be by accident, they have fairly earned; and she says so, tells them that she, in her advertisement, made no conditions, the money was freely offered to anyone who brought her tidings which would lead to the discovery of her lost son. Lord Sydenhault too adds the force of his words to his mother's. They might as well speak to the rocks that stand between the cottage and the sea.

"No, no, we'll no take wage for wark we never did," murmurs Hugh, with almost an offended air, while Jack leaves the cottage, saying as he goes,

"We'er able to work for siller honest. We'll no want meat an drink while there's fish in the sea."

Lord Sydenhault knows the fisherman and his sons thoroughly. He did not live with them all those weeks in their boat on the sea without learning the sterling stuff they are made of; he did not anticipate the result of his mother's visit and her offer of the reward; but it does not surprise him; he thinks he can arrange the question to the satisfaction of both the Countess and the fishermen. During the weeks he lived on board the cutter he came to find out what all of them most anxiously wished for, and now says to 'Thaniel,

"By whatever means it was brought about, you and your sons have done my mother and myself one of the greatest services that man can render to man; you have given me my liberty, perhaps my life; now in return for this great service we desire to render you some small service; you will allow us to do this?"

"You've dun enow, enow," 'Thaniel replies, as his fingers again find their way into his watch-pocket.

"My mother has done nothing, pray allow her Ladyship to shew her gratitude. When we were at St. Malo, Haco told me that you and my brother had some sharp words about an acre or two of land which you wished to buy near your cottage, where the Sydenhault property meets the Seymore, and which Thompson the steward refused to sell."

"Haco should no hae spoken about that to you, but it's true. I wanted to buy a bit o' land an Mr. Penryth spoke to me as I'd been the clod under his feet, so I just telled 'im I was as independent o' Lord Sydenhault as Lord Sydenhault was o' me. I got my living frae the sea, an I lived on my own land bought from Lord Sey-

more's father, an a heap more at's no worth speaking about."

"Well, I knew that you wished for the land, and the first thing I did on coming home was to make inquiries as to whether you could have your wish gratified. I found that the land you want cannot be sold, but it can be leased; leased for nine hundred and ninety years, and the Countess and I will let it to you for that time if you allow the rent to be decided by ourselves? Let us shake hands on it."

'Thaniel's hand grasps Lord Sydenhault's, in a moment his honest face is beaming with pleasure, "Aye, I'll shake hands on that bargain willingly, this is better than aw the money in Lunnun Town, Hugh," turning to his son, whose face evinces even more satisfaction than his father's.

"I am glad we have hit upon something which pleases us all," Lord Sydenhault says kindly, "come to the Hall to-morrow, the lease shall be ready for your signature.

The adieux are said,—the visitors gone,—and the fisherman, his wife and sons sit talking over the marvellous good fortune that has given them what has been the desire of their lives for many years, a piece of land contiguous to their own, so that when their children marry they may settle down on the homestead. On his return from Sydenhault Hall next morning 'Thaniel read the lease to his wife and sons. It was the very spot they had wished for so long, only instead of a few acres the lease was for a large farm, the rent to be three pence per

acre, the lease to last as long as the shore that bounded the farm on the South was washed by the waves of the German Ocean.

It is now time to tell the reader what became of Edward Penryth. He died by a relapse of the fever under which he had lain for so many weeks, and which the fatigue and agitation which he subsequently underwent brought on again in a worse form ere he had been an hour within the only place he could call home; the house occupied by his wife and children in Jersey.

Through Lord Seymore, the Dowager Countess of Sydenhault and her son were made aware of the existence of Edward Penryth's wife and family under the name of Marchmont, one which belonged to Edward Penryth, the Penryths having a right to that name from their father, Sir William Marchmont, his name before his marriage, after which by sign manual, he acquired the name of Penryth.

Lord Sydenhault immediately on the intelligence of his brother's death reaching him, hastened to Jersey whence he had his brother's body conveyed to England for interment in the family vault in Glamorganshire; immediately afterwards bringing his sister-in-law, the Honorable Mrs. Penryth, and her family, to reside in the Villa at Bayswater.

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CHAPTER XLII.

THE FINDING OF THE HOLY STONE.

IT is a lovely evening in autumn,—enjoying the calm twilight, Herbert Penryth and Ruby sit in the drawing-room of Seymore Castle, watching the fading light as it dies away over the billows of the German Ocean, and looking on St. Wolfgang's Rock beyond which they see the fishing boats one by one going out to sea.

They are seated in the drawing-room where, nearly three years before, Ruby had looked with breaking heart at the merry scene within, fancying that she heard her father's voice in the dining-room below.

Captain and Mrs. Wolferstan had been presented by Herbert Penryth with the house in which his mother lived, enlarged so as to suit their family, and, it being their own, Mrs. Wolferstan was glad to exchange the grandeur of the Castle, for a home more in keeping with their circumstances.

Ruby and her husband have only one visitor, but he is a dear and honored friend, the first guest they have had since their return home. Our old friend, Baron Ephraim has been at Seymore Castle for the last three days, and has resolved on the morrow to take his way back once more to his old quarters in the Tower, but before doing so he must resort to his last stratagem to

obtain possession of the precious stone which he now knows almost to a certainty where to find.

As they sit looking out on the quiet sea scene before them, the white sails of numerous fishing-boats shining in the golden rays of the setting sun, Baron Ephraim excusing himself, looks at his watch,

"Heigh ho!" he says, "I have tired myself climbing those hills of yours, but I must throw off my laziness, and go to the post-office for a letter, which I know will be there awaiting me."

"You shall do no such thing," replies Herbert Penryth, "one of the servants shall go to the post-office for your letter."

"Nay, that must not be, if you yourself will go for my letter," says the Baron with a good humored laugh, "that will do, but a servant must not be entrusted with the keeping of that letter."

"Then I certainly will go," replies Herbert, rising from his chair, "you know what pleasure it gives me to be able to serve you even in a trifle like this; adieu! in half an hour I will bring back the precious missive."

As Herbert Penryth goes out through the balcony to the lawn on his way to the post-office, Baron Ephraim walks to the opposite window, which commands a view of the gate leading from the grounds to the road, and waiting there until he sees his host out in the road and the gate shut, he returns to where Ruby sits looking at the white sailed fishing-boats as they go out to sea.

Taking from his pocket a small gold box, he opens it, and pouring on the pink cotton inside, some perfume

that at once pervades the air of the whole room, presents it to Ruby, saying,

"This is a marriage gift I purchased for you long ago; I have kept it purposely to present on the last evening we shall be together; tell me if you can decipher the inscription written inside the lid, and whether you like the perfume I have put into it?"

Ruby with a pleased smile takes the box from his hand, inhaling the perfume which seems at once to instil into her senses a pleasurable peaceful feeling, as if it would for the moment make her forget earth, enter Heaven.

"Is it not delicious?" asks the Baron.

"It is indeed," is Ruby's reply, raising the box that she may again inhale the fragrance.

Baron Ephraim approaches her as she does so, emptying the rest of the potent perfume contained in the little bottle, on the pink cotton as she holds the box close to her face. She is trying to read the inscription on the inside of the lid; it seems impossible for her to decipher a single character, her eyes involuntarily close; another instant, and every sense is steeped in forgetfulness.

The Baron lays her head gently on the back of the fauteuil on which she sits, and with light touch draws up the antique gold chain she wears round her neck, disclosing as he does so, a thick gold locket almost as large as a walnut.

In a moment it is opened, and the Holy Stone in all the glory of its sapphire blaze is before the ravished eyes of "Nathan the Seeker!"

The strong man's hand shakes as if he were old and

feeble; his eyes are filled with tears; his heart almost ceases to beat; his soul rises to Heaven in words of praise which his tongue cannot utter. This is the moment he has longed and prayed for all his life long. For an instant he gazes with awe-struck eyes on the blazing light as it flashes forth its prismatic colours in his dazzled sight, for one instant looks on the wonderous words graven on its golden band, then, it is dropped with reverence from its case into one of pure gold, lined with soft white satin, which, made centuries ago, has been renewed age by age, each Seeker bearing it about in hopes that it would at last contain the Holy Stone.

The egg-like antique gold box is closed with awe by the man who scarcely can tear his eyes from looking on the holy thing it contains. It is put with reverential care into his breast, Ruby's gold locket is shut, and again, with a light touch, the antique chain let down into its resting place. The saturated cotton is taken from the perfume box, thrown into the fire, and cotton with otto of roses substituted in its place.

Baron Ephraim now opens the glass door leading to the balcony, and the fresh sea breeze effectually dispels all the remains of the potent Oriental perfume, by whose aid 'Nathan the Seeker' has gained the Holy Stone!

He takes a book from the table, opens it and as Ruby's eyes unclose she fancies that the Baron Ephraim is occupied in reading.

"Could I have been guilty of going to sleep?" she says with a slight blush.

"When?" asks the Baron, as he raises his head, looking in her face with a pleased smile.

"Since you gave me this beautiful box, with its sweet perfume," Ruby replies, raising it in her hand as she speaks.

"You have not had much time," observes the Baron as he looks at his watch, "it is only five minutes since Mr. Penryth left the room."

"Indeed! It seems to me as if overcome by the sweet perfume, I fell asleep an hour ago."

"It is not often that otto of roses has that effect," says the Baron good-humoredly, "but if its potency is such with you, I think I must leave you the bottle as well as the box; the otto of rose here is perfectly pure, I brought it many years ago from Cashmere, see what a strange looking bottle it is contained in."

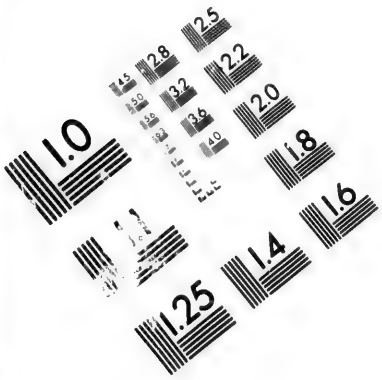
"Strange indeed!" Ruby takes the bottle in her hand, as she speaks, "it is quite a curiosity in itself, and so pretty. I value these gifts of yours highly, and shall lay them aside among my white things."

While she is speaking, her husband enters by the balcony as he had gone out, delivering into the hands of Baron Ephraim a letter which in its dimensions almost deserves the name of a parcel, and at the same time exclaiming,

"What a sweet perfume!" looking round the room he adds, "it seems as if you had a hundred roses here; what have you been doing?"

Ruby puts the box into his hand, "There is the secret of the perfume; this is a present I have just received from our friend, the Baron Ephraim. If you sit down





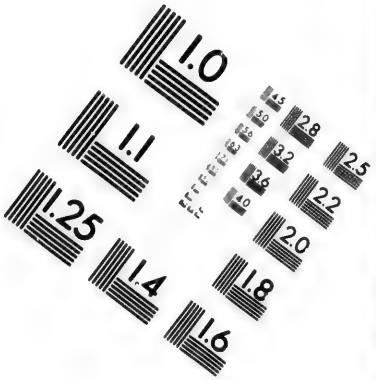
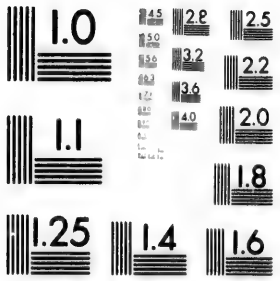
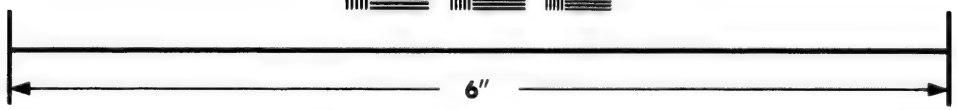
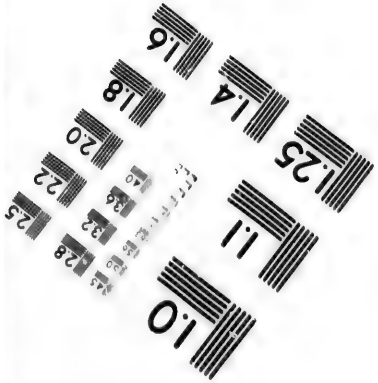
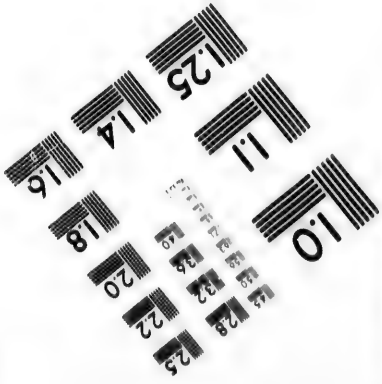


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quietly and inhale it, it gives you such a pleasant feeling, almost makes you dream."

"It may do so to you," replies her husband laughing, "but I doubt very much its power to exert such an influence on my nerves."

Baron Ephraim has already excused himself, and carrying his letter in his hand, leaves the room. In less than a quarter of an hour he returns to say 'good-bye.'

"You will not surely go now?" exclaims Ruby and Herbert Penryth in one breath, "you promised to remain with us until to-morrow, and you know how disappointed we are that you cannot make your visit weeks instead of days."

"I cannot, it is impossible;" replies the Hebrew, speaking with an almost solemn voice, and a grave expression of countenance which carries conviction with it, "it is most important that I should leave by the train which will start in ten minutes. I go on business of the utmost importance, business that not only concerns myself but my nation. I shall not rest night or day, I shall not slacken my speed for one moment until it is fulfilled. Farewell, farewell. The good-will of Him who dwelt in the bush be with ye both. Farewell!"

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE RABBI ABRAHAM. THE HOLY STONE.

The legend divinely has said,—
Thus was a heritage given
To a race bearing proudly their pain,

JACOB G. ASCHER.

Along the consecrated air —
The benediction and the Psalm —
The words of praise and prayer.

KATE SEYMORE.

BARON EPHRAIM, now the bearer of the Holy Stone, went by rail to London that night, whence he sailed to Cadiz, again by rail, through Seville to Grenada, staying his course neither by night nor by day.

Before arriving at Grenada he left the carriage which had conveyed him the last few miles of his journey, and entered the Vega gate, as he had done on his first journey, alone and on foot; but instead of the poor rusty garments which he then wore, he was now apparelled as became the position of a Hebrew gentleman,— the bearer of the Holy Stone,— the most honoured man that day in Israel.

"Sholem lachem, my brother," were the words which 'Nathan the Seeker' addressed to David the keeper of the Vega gate, as he entered Grenada.

"Lachem sholem,* my Lord," was the response of the

* Sholem lachem — peace unto thee
Lachem sholem — unto thee peace.

keeper of the gate, who now looked in wonder at the stately walk and handsome apparel of the man who, he was sure, bore the face of 'Nathan the Seeker,' and who five years before had passed through the city in such poor garments.

The Seeker's reception in the vestibule of the Rabbi's house was in like manner different from the one he had before received from the porter. Now the man did reverence to the goodly raiment he wore, and let justice be done, had the porter known it was 'Nathan the Seeker' who demanded access to the Rabbi, he would have done reverence to the man. The one who bore that name would have been honoured by a Hebrew o'er all the world.

It was yet early in the day when Nathan arrived, and he was shown at once into the private apartments of the Rabbi Abraham.

The Rabbi is seated in the room which he had occupied on the Seeker's former visit; he is busily engaged in writing, and only raises his head slightly as he hears the door open, and the footsteps of a stranger approach the table. As his eyes fall on the 'Seeker,' they express surprise more than any other feeling.

"Nathan, my brother!" the Rabbi says, but the words are not spoken with the same heartiness and pleasure as when the men met in the midnight five years before, yet they have a tone of kindness, and the Rabbi rises from his seat, and pressing the hand of Nathan, points to the chair he wishes the 'Seeker' to occupy. "To what am I indebted for this visit?" continues the Rabbi, "it is

only five years since we last met; is it well to spend time thus?"

Nathan does not take the chair indicated by the Rabbi, but standing with a profound reverence, replies, "It is well, my father, none other could do mine errand."

The Rabbi speaks not, but his eyes seek those of Nathan with an uneasy look, as if he fears the man is going to say something which he, as Rabbi of his people must not hear, make a request he dare not accede to. At length he says, "Do your errand," still gazing with serious, troubled eyes on the face of the 'Seeker.' Nathan proceeds to unbutton his coat, which is of the finest cloth, under which is a vest of black silk such as a king might wear.

"You are bravely apparelled," the Rabbi says dryly as he looks with an eye of stern displeasure on the dress of Nathan.

"I need be, my father," is the reply, given in the same reverential, solemn voice in which the 'Seeker' has spoken since his entrance. The vest is unfastened, and from the folds of a broad silk girdle, which he wears underneath, is drawn a velvet pouch; this he opens, and taking therefrom a small mat of the same fine texture, places it on the table by which the Rabbi sits, his face expressing unwonted trouble as he watches the actions of the 'Seeker.' Last of all, there is taken from another aperture in the pouch the small golden casket in which Nathan had deposited the Holy Stone. Placing this on the velvet mat before the Rabbi, he speaks these words,

"My task is ended,—my work is done!"

The Rabbi is seated with one arm resting upon the

table, the fingers of his hands close to the mat on which the casket lies, the arm and hand tremble with an agitation which the old man is unable to repress. For a second or two he speaks not, he is summoning resolution to do his duty, and he knows it will be a hard task—such an one as neither he, nor his predecessors for a thousand years have been called upon to perform. "Nay, my brother Nathan," the Rabbi says with solemn voice, his tone and look deeply expressive of the sorrow he feels, "I cannot take back the casket; when thou didst accept the office of Seeker at my hand, it was taken for all the days of the years of thy pilgrimage. The words which twenty years ago ye spake in the Holy City, old Jerusalem, in presence of 'the people' were no light words. Thou art bound by the most solemn vow to be Seeker for the Holy Stone while thou hast breath. I have no power by which I can release thee from thy vow. It was not made unto me, but unto all Israel, unto the Lord. Alas! my brother, my heart is woe for thee; that having once laid thy hand to the plough thou shouldst seek to turn back. Did I not warn thee in the days of thy preparation when thou didst fast and pray, that thou must give up all ties of kindred, home, and thy father's house; that the oath once taken, thenceforth all things in life and death must be subservient to the one great purpose thou wast sworn to!" The Rabbi stops as if exhausted, visibly trembling with agitation in every limb.

"My father, undo the casket," Nathan replies in a strong, firm voice.

"Nay," responds the Rabbi, "I will not even touch it; nothing but thy death or the finding of the 'Stone' can

give me power to do so. I can only open that casket when I show it to thy successor."

Nathan the 'Seeker' draws himself up to his full height, and standing before the Rabbi with arms folded across his bosom, his appearance and voice suggestive of deep emotion, he says, "My Lord, I shall have no successor. THE STONE IS FOUND!!"

The Rabbi, with even more irrepressible signs of feeling than before, repeats in impatient, almost angry tones, the words of Nathan, "The Stone is found!—Mock me not, my brother."

"Nay, my father, I speak the words of truth and soberness." The 'Seeker' pauses for a few seconds and then continues, "It is not mine office to open the casket, or my Lord should know by the seeing of the eye what he now doubts, that my words are truth. I have accomplished my mission,— fulfilled my oath. The Holy Stone is before my father!"

The Rabbi looks in the face of Nathan with a deep scrutinizing glance, one that speaks of doubt,— faith,— pain,— joy. Raising his hand to heaven, and looking earnestly in the Seeker's face, he says with solemn voice, "If I break my oath this day, on thy head be the guilt."

"Even so, oh my father!" is the reply of Nathan, as he still stands unmoved before the Rabbi.

The casket is raised, a key which hangs at the Rabbi's girdle is put in the lock; in an instant it is wide open; the Rabbi utters a cry of joy as his eyes look on the blaze of purple glory he had never expected to see in the flesh, and with his voice full of emotion, exclaims,

"The Holy Stone given by the Angel Raphael unto Tobias!"

The Rabbi raises the Stone with trembling hand, and reverend care, and reads aloud the legend written in the Hebrew of the law, even the same that the finger of God wrote on the tables of stone given to Moses on Mount Sinai.

ברכי (נפשי) את ה׳ המלך הנדול
באור תפארתו ינהל אלהים את
ישראל בשמחה

God shall lead Israel with joy, in the light of his glory. Bless God, oh my soul!

The Rabbi's voice trembles with emotion, his eyes are filled with tears, his heart almost ceases to beat, his soul rises to heaven in words of praise which his tongue cannot utter. This is the moment the Rabbi Abraham has longed for, and prayed for, all his life — For an instant he gazes with awe-struck eyes on the blazing light as it flashes forth its prismatic colours in his dazzled sight, looks on the wondrous graven words. The revulsion of feeling is too much for the old man, covering his face with his garment he lifts up his voice and weeps. It is but the weakness of a moment, the Rabbi removes his shoes from off his feet, signing to Nathan to do like-

wise. Raising himself up, he lifts both hands to heaven and throwing back his head so that his whole face is raised up, bursts forth under the influence of a mighty inspiration;

"There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the Heavens and in his excellency on the sky.

He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel.

The shout of the King is among them.

Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel.

Behold 'The people' shall rise up as a great lion, and lift him up as a young lion.

Moses commanded us a law, even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob.

The Lord came from Sinai and rose up from Seir unto them. He shined forth from Mount Paran, and He came with ten thousand of his saints. From His right hand went a fiery law for them.

Yea, he loved 'The people.'"

The Rabbi stops speaking, lays his hands on the head of Nathan for a few seconds, and then both men bow themselves down in silence, with their faces to the ground; they continue thus for some minutes in silent prayer, and then, without word or sign to each other, both men rise up. The Rabbi places his hands on the head of Nathan and again bursts forth under the influence of the same mighty inspiration as before—

"Thy bow shall abide in strength.

Thine arms shall be made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.

Even by the God of thy fathers who shall help thee; and by the Lord Jehovah who shall bless thee, with the precious things of Heaven above, blessings of the dew, blessings of the deep, that coucheth beneath.

Blessings unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills.

They shall be on thy head, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.

The Lord God of thy fathers give thee of the dew of Heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine.

Let the people serve thee, and "The nations" bow down before thee.

(Cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.)

The Lord give thee of the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and the precious things put forth by the moon, and the chief things of the ancient mountains, and the precious things of the lasting hills.

Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy days so shall thy strength be.

The eternal God shall be thy refuge, and underneath thee the everlasting arms.

He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee, and shall say, Destroy them.

The God of Jeshurun bless thee.

The good will of him that dwelt in the bush, come

upon the head of Ephraim and upon the top of the head of him who was separate from his brethren."

Nathan the Seeker's work is done. There is no such name now in Israel.

Baron Ephraim departed from the house of the Rabbi Abraham the possessor of fabulous wealth. The offerings of Israel for a thousand years. Baron Ephraim knew not of this, when he devoted his life to the cause he had accomplished. No Seeker had ever known that a vast treasure was accumulating for the one who should find and bring back to Israel the 'Holy Stone' from the hands of the Gentile. The Seeker destined to come in the fulness of time, the time ripe for the fulfilment of the prophecy.

CHAPTER XLIV.

"Jerusalem as a city is
Compactly built together,
And unto it the tribes go up,
The tribes of God go hither."—*Psalms.*

"If I forget thee O Jerusalem, let
my right hand forget her cunning."—*Psalms.*

THE purpose to which Nathan had vowed his life is accomplished. He is yet in his early manhood, his 'eye is not dim, nor his natural force abated.' Now, a motive more powerful than that which impelled him to seek for the Holy Stone, is in his soul; a purpose higher and holier. With the great riches which are now his, he seeks the Land of Promise, where once "The people dwelt in safety, having none to make them afraid;" where "The Kings lie each in his own house;" the Tomb of David, the Tomb of Solomon, both in the hands of the heathen, where the Hebrew dare not enter.

Nathan is even now on his way to Jerusalem to purchase lands and build houses for 'the people'; the downtrodden Israelite—The children of the Promise. Every talent of the gold he has won, shall go back in blessings to the children and the children's children of those who gave it. And he will give, not his gold alone, but himself, to lift his brethren from the dust, to gather them from among 'the Nations.'

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WAITING THE DEAD.

Nathan knows that the fortune he is possessed of, immense as it is, would go but a small way towards accomplishing the work he has set himself, but he also knows that the Hebrews, scattered as they are among the islands of the West, the snows of Russia, or under the burning sun of India, are the possessors of untold wealth, and that every Hebrew, be he great or small, is as one man ready to give his all when the time of the promise comes, the time foretold by the prophets, when the Lord shall say, "I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy. I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies, my house shall be built in it."

Nathan is on board the Steamer bound for Joppa. He is on deck night and day, straining his eyes to catch the first glimpse of the beloved land he left twenty years ago, the land that then, he never expected to see again. The day is dawning on a long, low, sandy shore, a small promontory projects into the sea, and there stands Joppa, among its beautiful gardens, cool and pleasant, welcoming the wanderer home with the singing of birds in the early morn.

There is something the matter with the ship, a leak or some other impediment, and her course is stayed. It is the first interruption to his progress that Nathan has had since he left the house of the Rabbi Abraham, his heart beats quick with expectation, he longs for wings that he may fly across the waters that separate him from Syria, the land of his fathers lying in his sight — basking in the morning sun. The ship has cast anchor, Nathan has

never felt anything worthy the name of impatience until this moment; within the last few minutes his impatience has become almost a passion. He paces the deck with rapid stride, impotent to help himself or to bear his disappointment with calmness, consumed with a burning desire to touch the shore, kiss the dust of his native land. Suddenly a skiff manned by three or four Arab sailors appears only a gunshot from the ship. Where has it come from? Has it started up from beneath the waves?—One instant, the stories of magic so rife in the East come to his mind, the next they are discarded, his life in the cold North that seeks proof for everything, has given to Nathan's mind a scepticism the East knows not. He hurries to the side of the ship where the sailors in the skiff are already resting on their oars, speaking to the Captain of the ship in their native Arabic. Their voices and the language they speak, are in Nathan's ears like the sound of pleasant waters. It is the language he spoke every day in his boyhood, and after a lapse of twenty years, he knows it as well as he does the Hebrew he learnt in his father's house, in which he prays morning and night in the words that are the epitome of his faith, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one God."

A few words to the Arab sailors in their own tongue is all that is needed. Nathan is in the skiff, they have set sail, the little shell-like boat is skimming like a joyous seabird to the shore. The moment he has longed for, almost day and night since he left Grenada, has come, his foot once more treads his native land under the rays of the glowing eastern sun, its sands look like sparkling gold, washed by waters of liquid silver.

Nathan has letters given him by the Rabbi Abraham, for Hebrews both in Joppa and Jerusalem, and with a light valise in his hand, he takes his way up the steep steps of the dreary town, in search of the residence of the Rabbi, Abraham's friend. At length he reaches the street pointed out to him, and again asks his way of an old man who is walking back and forth in front of a house, before the open door of which, he stops and looks inside each time he passes.

In answer to Nathan's inquiry the old man looks in his face for a second or two, and then says, in rather an ungracious manner, "Why seek ye the house of Hiram of Sidon?"

Nathan knows well it is a Jew he is speaking to; the man's dress does not differ from that of any other he has passed in his long walk from the miserable little enclosure of rocks which is called the harbour, but there is an innate feeling in the breast of every Hebrew, which fulfils the old adage, "a Hebrew knows a Hebrew all the world over," and so he produces the Rabbi Abraham's letter from his wallet and hands it to the old man; he knows it will act as a talisman. There is a mark on the envelope, a mere crooked line, which to a Gentile eye would convey no meaning, seem but an unintentional scratch, yet to each Hebrew who looks upon it, it tells that the letter comes from the High Priest — the Rabbi Abraham. The stranger's face lightens up like a sudden gleam of sunshine as his eyes fall on the letter in his hand with its mystic mark.

"This is the writing of the Rabbi Abraham?" he says inquiringly, speaking slowly and with a degree of pre-

cision which seems habitual. "Was the letter given into your own hand? Did you see the Rabbi? Are you from Europe?

"I saw the Rabbi Abraham a few days back, I have been travelling night and day since then."

"Come into my house, rest and eat bread, I am Hiram of Sidon."

Saying this the old man leads the way through a long passage to a room at the back of the house, where an elderly woman is occupied in placing a frugal breakfast on the table, a fragrant smell of coffee pervades the room, exciting Nathan's appetite, which his long walk in the morning air has made rather keen.

"Rebecca, this young man has brought me word from the Rabbi Abraham, with whom he has spoken only a few days since," Hiram says, laying aside his hat as he enters.

The woman acknowledges the introduction by raising a pair of soft brown eyes to Nathan's face, eyes that in spite of faded cheek and wrinkled brow, retain their power and beauty, and speak a kindly welcome. The fare consists of coarse bread, rice and cucumbers; not the breakfast which would have been served to Baron Ephraim in the Tower of London, but when Hiram puts on his hat that he may say the prayer before meat, wherein he blesses the Creator of all things for being permitted to enjoy the sustenance the earth yields, Nathan joins in it with greater fervour, more thankfulness than he has known for years. The meal over, the master of the house again replaces his hat and now prays for a much longer time than before.

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CEDARS OF LEBANON.

Previous to the prayer before meat, Rebecca had retired into an inner chamber, leaving Hiram and his guest to enjoy the meal she had spread before them, she did not appear again, and after the last prayer Hiram sits down in the methodical way in which he does everything, that he may read the Rabbi's letter. He reads the letter slowly, twice over, its contents affect him powerfully; his hand shakes, and several times he lifts his eyes to the face of his guest who sits in silence, watching the countenance of the old man. At length it is evident he comprehends what he reads, realizes the startling news it tells him, that in his poor house, sits the greatest man in Israel, and that that man has eaten of his bread and salt. For some minutes his emotion is too powerful to allow him to speak. At length he says, looking full in Nathan's face as if he were asking a question,

"The Stone is found?"

Nathan replies, "Yea, verily, the Stone is found."

"And thou, whither goest thou?" asks Hiram, with manifest interest.

"I go up to Jerusalem, that with my brethren I may keep the holy fast of the ninth of Ab."

"Thou shalt not go alone; I too will go up to the Holy City and keep the fast," Hiram says, speaking with an energy which is evidently unwonted.

"To be in Jerusalem on the morning of the eighth we must not delay one hour," is Nathan's reply.

"Thou shalt not be delayed by me; I am even now ready," Hiram says, as he leaves the room, entering that to which Rebecca had retired. In a few seconds he is

back again, saying as he enters, "Come, the young men with the camels will meet us outside the city."

This is the arrangement Nathan would have made had Hiram consulted him; he is now as impatient to be at Jerusalem as he was in the early morning to touch his native soil, and the exercise of walking is better suited to quiet his excited nerves than the leisurely tread of the camel, besides they are to join a caravan of pilgrims ontside the gate, and until they meet, inaction would be irksome in the extreme.

The gate is open, but the road is filled with Turkish soldiers who stroll about the vacant space between it and the draw-bridge, in the front is a marble fountain engraved with many pious Arabic inscriptions, recommending the traveller as he quaffs the pure water to bless the Giver. Around and above the inclosure surrounding the fountain, are thickly clustering vines, their broad green leaves forming a shelter from the fierce noon-day sun, and making myriads of tiny fans which double every light breeze that stirs the air. Groups of dusky girls display the most graceful attitudes as they bend to fill their water jars or balance them daintily on their veiled heads.

A broad sandy path leads from the town through rich gardens shaded by cypresses and mimosas and hedged by gigantic cactus, to another fountain and an open space sheltered by palms; under these they find Hiram's servants with the kneeling camels waiting for them; behind are several groups of travellers and Jewish pilgrims, the latter like themselves on their way up to Jerusalem to keep the fast of the ninth of Ab.

Without delay the camels are burdened with the men

and their baggage, and a few miles further on, the road opens upon the Plains of Sharon, aglow with the red and purple of its gorgeous wild flowers, the iris, the tulip — every flower except the rose of Sharon!

The Hill country of Judea lies before them in a faint blue ridge, the plains of Ascalon stretch out on the right, the high tower of Rama appears clearly in the distance. Nathan's eye wanders from right to left, taking in each feature of the landscape, and his heart is stirred with a strange sorrow as he recals to mind the history of the land for thousands of years back, and a tumultous hope that the time is at hand when Israel will no longer with bowed down head utter the wailing cry, "How long, oh Lord, how long!" Nathan is startled from his reverie by the voice of Hiram, who, pointing towards Ramleh, says, "To-morrow we shall be in Jerusalem."

They rest for a few hours at Ramleh. The ancient Ramah (Arimathea) where Israel was governed by the immediate direction of God — where Samuel judged the people — and where alas! — "The elders of Israel gathered themselves together and came to Samuel unto Ramah, and said unto him, make us a king to judge us like the nations, and the thing displeased Samuel, and Samuel prayed unto the Lord, and Samuel told the words of the Lord unto the people who asked of him a king" — told them of the woe their kings would bring upon them; nevertheless the people said, "Nay, but we will have a king over us." Where Samuel called Saul to the top of the house at the spring of day, and where, when Samuel had communed with Saul upon the top of the house, they came into the city, and Samuel took

a vial of oil and poured it upon Saul's head, and annointed him to be captain over Israel.

Next morning they are early astir, and in the cool morning air have accomplished two hours travel, passed the ruins of Ekron and entered a defile of rocky mountains, where laurustinus, privet and the bay tree, grow thickly over the steep slopes. The scenery becomes wilder and wilder at each winding of the road, until the path necessitates one perpetual climb, where slippery rocks yawning into deep fissures, constitute the only road. Yet this has been for four thousand years the highway between Jerusalem and the western plains that border on the sea. They pass by the village of Jeremiah, and a little further on come upon the scene of David's combat with Goliah; its little brook sparkling as freshly, running as swiftly as the day on which the boy hero "ruddy and goodly to look to," picked up the pebbles to smite the Philistine, three thousand years ago.

A large caravan is assembled on the banks of the little stream with its picturesque variety of laden camels, mountain cavaliers with turban and embroidered vest, veiled women on donkeys with gay trappings; half naked Arabs with long spears; Turks with kaftan or furred pelisse, all eagerly drinking from the precious stream or resting under the shadow of a great rock.

The hills become more and more precipitous as they approach Jerusalem, nearly all of a conical form, and terraced to the very top. On these steep acclivities the Israëlite of old grew corn and wine and oil, and on those

terraces that still remain uninjured, the present inhabitants plant wheat and vineyards and olive trees.

The path-way continues as rough as ever while they wind through the rocky defiles leading to the upper plains. At each acclivity they climb, they assure each other that the next will reveal to them the object of their destination. At length they enter upon a wide and barren plain; the pilgrims sink on their knees — a shout of enthusiasm bursts from every man in that large company, while each, be he Arab, Hebrew or Englishman, exclaims in his own tongue, Jerusalem!—Jerusalem!

CHAPTER XLV.

"As round about Jerusalem,
The mountains stand alway,
The Lord encompasseth his folk,
From henceforth and for aye."

Psalms.

THE city where David dwelt — the chosen seat of God — Jerusalem. All its history,—its holiness and crime,— its prosperity and desolation,— its triumph and despair,— come thronging into Nathan's recollection, peopling its fallen towers and desolate plains with the lives of patriarchs and prophets who had passed from earth thousands of years ago. For the moment, entirely forgetful of his own life and all its associations, he only sees the sacred city, where the Prophets preached and David sung. Nathan, together with the rest of his brethren, prostrates himself on the ground, lays his forehead in the dust, while a silence more impressive than the most impassioned words broods over all.

"When the crusading army, thinned by pestilence, privation, and many a hard fought battle field, first gazed upon Jerusalem, that warrior host knelt down as a single man: sobs burst from their mailed bosoms, and tears streamed down their rugged cheeks. These tears, and not the blood so profusely shed upon the plains of Palestine were the true evidences of the crusading spirit."

Apart from all associations ; the first view of Jerusalem is a most striking one. Not a tree or green spot is visible, no sign of life breaks the solemn silence. The flaming monotonous sunshine above, and the rocky wastes beneath, realize but too faithfully the prophetic picture, "Thy sky shall be brass, and thy land shall be iron." It is unlike anything else on earth — so blank to the eye — so full of meaning to the heart. To the right and left as far as the eye can reach, grey undulations of colourless rock extend to the horizon, a desolate plain in front bounded by a half decayed battlemented wall, above which towers frown, and mosque-domes swell, intermingled with an undistinguishable mass of terraced roofs. High over the city rises the Mount of Olives ; the distant hills of Moab which seem to reach the sky, form the back ground to the striking picture.

Each party waits for the others to finish their devotions ; at length all have arisen from their genuflections and prostrations, and begin to move slowly forward, in the slippery path which human feet have worn in the solid rock.

Nathan and Hiram of Sidon are in rear of the others ; they are both thinking of the same subject ; of the resolution Nathan has made to dedicate himself and his substance to the restoration of 'The People' to their own beloved land. Suddenly Hiram stays his footsteps, and signing to Nathan to do likewise, he raises his hands to Heaven, his face seems to shine with glory from the upper world, his form dilates as if under the influence of sudden inspiration, and his voice goes forth in solemn

accents on the silent air as he exclaims in low clear tones only audible to the one by his side:

"The Lord doth build up Jerusalem—*He* gathereth together the outcasts of Israel."

The men stand for some minutes, as if rooted to the spot; the others have passed on a short distance in advance, they are alone—yet each feels as if in the presence of another than themselves, one who can speak to the soul by some subtle power that needs not the body nor the organs thereof—they experience a joy unspeakable, their hearts are filled with wonder, love and praise. Again Hiram lifts his hands and his eyes to Heaven,—again the same mysterious influence is upon him, and he takes up his parable and says:—

"The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David.
Of the fruit of thy body I will set upon thy throne.
The Lord hath chosen Zion, he hath desired it for his habitation.
This is my rest forever, here will I dwell.
I will clothe her priests with salvation, her saints shall shout aloud for Joy.
There will I make the horn of David to bud.
Upon himself shall his crown flourish."

Hiram is silent, but the words he has been constrained to speak are still sounding in the ears of both men, telling them that no effort of puny man will hasten the day of the Lord. That for the ingathering of Israel, they must wait the fiat of the great "I AM." That Nathan's gold will help 'The people,' to build houses and plant vineyards, but it is only the power of the mighty God of

Jacob, that will 'build Jerusalem,'—call 'The people' home. They walk on in silence, their hearts full of awe and love to Him who hath said:

"Fear not, thou worm Jacob, ye shall thresh the mountains.

I will assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.

And they shall come thither and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof, and all the abominations thereof.

And they shall be my people and I will be their God."

Hiram and Nathan enter the city by the Pilgrim's gate and at once proceed to the house of one of Hiram's friends, a poor, mean looking place, as are all the houses of the Hebrews in Jerusalem, but inside not lacking in any needful comfort. They are received with the brotherly welcome the children of the promise give to each other wherever they meet. This characteristic of the Hebrew is very noticeable, and it is doubtless due to this spirit that among the poor who beg in the streets of Europe and America there is no such person as a pauper Jew, and perhaps it is also in a great measure owing to this, that in our criminal courts a Jew criminal is almost unheard of. In whatever point of view the Jew is considered, he is by far the most remarkable of all earth's tribes. Their complete individuality, their persecutions, their undying hope, their steadfast faith that they shall yet be the greatest people on the face of the earth, set them apart from all others.

Though scattered over every region, their physical and

moral traits are the same as in the days when they worshipped the Lord in his Holy Temple on Mount Zion. They have endured persecutions such as were never known by other nations, but the prophecy of Malachi is still fulfilled, "I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

They have had their temple twice, their city six times destroyed, yet they are as confident of their restoration to their own land as that the morrow's sun will rise. The Bible speaks plainly enough on this subject, so that "he who runs may read." "The Lord will yet have mercy upon Jacob, and will yet choose Israel and set them in their own land.' In Ezekiel, God declares "He will take the Ten Tribes and the Two Tribes and unite them in His hand," that He, will gather together the children of Israel from among the heathen on every side, and bring them unto the land and will make them a nation on the mountains of Israel; and wherever the lost tribes may dwell, or at whatever time they may return to Jerusalem, Zechariah says distinctly, they are to be preceded by the Tribes of Judah.

The Jew is a zealous student of the prophecies, and thinks that in Solomon and others of his race, the promises that regard Shiloh are fulfilled. Their hope of the coming Messiah is ever present, and in their prayers for the day of atonement are these remarkable words, "Woe unto us, for we have no mediator!"

In Hungary the Jews have stately Synagogues, richly endowed colleges and courts of judicature. There, in the year 1650, took place a most extraordinary assembly, convened to decide whether the Messiah was come or not. Three hundred Rabbonim, and an immense multi-

tude of Jews assembled on the plain of Ageda. Some of the Rabbonim expressed a wish to hear the Protestant divines upon the subject, but two Roman Catholic priests proposed to expound to them the doctrine of the Christian Faith, and shortly there arose a cry, as in old Jerusalem, "We will have no man God! No Virgin," and the people tore their hair and rent their garments!

"The Carites are said to be a pure remnant of the Hebrews, what the Israelite was and will be, before the ingathering of 'The people' come. They abide scrupulously by the written law, rejecting the Talmud and Rabbinical explanations. There are many of these Jews in Lithuania, and Wolff found five thousand of them at Bagdad, who were distinguished for veracity and called 'Children of the Book.' There are also many of them in the Crimea, where their character deservedly stands very high. They speak Hebrew as a household language."

The Jew should be seen at Jerusalem,—the city of the great King,—the native city of his race. In the proud silent man who walks thoughtfully in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, climbs with saddened air the heights of Mount Zion, or bends sorrowing to the ground at the "Place of Wailing," you seem to behold one of the old Prophets come to revisit the place, speak again to the people, unto whom thousands of years ago he called in the name of the Lord: "why will ye die, ye house of Israel?" The thoughtful dark eye, and broad forehead, the noble profile that has come down to them through thousands of generations, and hundreds of climes, are nature's attestations of the old history.

Hiram and Nathan are received with all kindness by their host and his family, who when they hear who he is, look upon the latter almost with reverence; water is brought to wash their feet and poured upon their hands, and savoury meat is set before them. The old man is wearied with his journey, and retires into an inner chamber to rest, but it is yet early in the day, and Nathan seeks a horse that he may visit the Pools of Solomon. It will be a long ride, but his Arab mare is fleet of foot and he longs to see the place which he visited with his father thirty years ago. They push forward at a gallop over a wild and rocky tract where the pathway is scarcely visible among the fragments with which it is thickly strewn, yet this has been a highway from the days of Abraham; and we read of chariots being used along these roads.

Now, the way lies over a slippery, rocky surface, again narrowed between blocks of stone, or tangled roots, or gored by wide fissures. Nathan's fleet Arab bounds on unconcerned, whether the course is over smooth turf or rugged rock, she sweeps along as if it were a pastime. They pass through Bethlehem, and on the road to Hebron come to the Pools of Solomon from which water was once conveyed to Jerusalem. The name of the pools in Arabic, is El-Burak: they consist of three large reservoirs partly excavated in the rock, partly built of square stones and bearing marks of the high antiquity claimed for them. They are placed one above the other on the slopes, but not in a direct line, and so arranged that the bottom of one is higher than the surface of the next below. Flights of steps lead down to the water which is now very shallow. Nathan dismounts, walks from

one pool to the other, indulging in pleasant reminiscences of his boyhood—almost sees his father's face as he stoops over the stone parapet and looks down into the water,—a gleam of sunshine darting across the Pool makes the water sparkle as it touches the ripples which the light wind makes on its surface; it recalls Nathan to the present, tells him the afternoon is waning, and he will need all the time now left him if he would fulfil the purpose for which he came to Jerusalem.

In a second he is mounted, and in an hour his fleet footed Arab mare has brought him again to the house of Hiram's friend. It is the hour for entering the Synagogue; and Nathan, clothed in sackcloth, puts off his shoes as he enters the door of the holy place, to keep the fast of the ninth of Ab; there to lie prostrate before the Lord, and with head bowed in the dust, listen to the solemn words of penitence and prayer from the elders of Israel An old man with hair as white as snow, pleads: "O Lord thou hast seen my wrong; plead thou my cause. The crown is fallen from our head; woe unto us, that we have sinned! Our inheritance is turned to strangers, our houses to aliens."

Another beseeches the Lord, saying; "Our fathers have sinned and are not, and we have borne their iniquities. For this our heart is faint; for these things our eyes are dim."

Yet another prays with tears and strong cries. "Wherefore dost thou forget us forever, and forsake us so long time? Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old." A moment's

pause, and the same voice wails in low accents, "But thou hast utterly rejected us, thou art very wroth against us!"

The Synagogue is draped in black, woe is marked on every countenance, each head sprinkled with dust. There are no regular readers as at other times, their grief is too great to allow of keeping the formula of their liturgy. The perpetual lamp seems the only thiug which bears no mark of sorrow. It still burns on,— the light for the dead,— as it has done, day and night, year after year, since the day the Synagogue was consecrated; as it will do for centuries, until the walls and roof it hangs from crumble into dust. Their grief is of the deepest character, and given utterance to, in the most impetuous outpouring of tears and lamentations; this depth of sorrow has been a feature of the Hebrew character from a very remote antiquity, the Bible is full of it. "They lifted up their voice and wept." "They rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads towards Heaven." The fast of Ab is kept to commemorate the destruction of the second temple by Titus, and is one of the most solemn fasts of the Hebrew church. The only day on which the Hebrew puts off his shoes on entering the Synagogue. It is worthy of note that the nations of the Gentiles celebrate their victories, the Hebrews alone commemorate their defeats!

Nathan has accomplished the purpose for which he sought Jerusalem, he has kept the fast of the ninth of Ab with his brethren, he has laid before the elders of Israel his plans for ameliorating the condition of 'The People' and has had the advice of those who know best

what is most needful, and how the work shall be done.

Hiram's soul cleaves unto Nathan; in these few days in which they have sojourned together, there has sprung up a fount of love in the old man's heart for this stranger, even as if he were his own son, and he resolves to go with Nathan to Sidon, and there see once more his father's house and his kinsfolk ere he die.

They leave Jerusalem together, stop at the place of wailing outside the wall, and there bow down together before the Lord, and pray to the God of Israel to bless the cause Nathan has taken in hand. Pray, that the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will hasten the time, when 'The People' will come up from the North, and from the South, out of the East, and the West, with joy and rejoicing, to serve the Lord in Zion. A little farther on, they pass through the Jewish cemetery, where four women surround one of the tombs, wailing their dead. They retrace their steps to Joppa, where they stay only to eat bread in Hiram's house, see his wife and family, and hear that they are well. A ship bound for Sidon is in the harbour ready to set sail, and ere night they are out to sea. Arrived at Sidon, the time is come when these two friends so strangely met, yet so closely bound by ties of affection, must part. The old man's eyes are full of tears and his voice trembles as he raises his hands and eyes to Heaven that he may bless Nathan with the blessing pronounced by Aaron and his sons on the sanctified people. "The Lord bless and preserve thee! The Lord let His countenance shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee! The Lord turn His countenance towards thee, and give thee peace."

Nathan is alone with his servant, climbing Mount Lebanon on the road to his father's house. Every step he takes is on familiar ground; every village he passes through reminds him of days long gone by, when with his father he came to visit his kinsfolk and friends, who dwelt lower down the mountain. He stops for a while to gaze on the scene around the natural bridge, to look on some women grinding corn outside the house door; but the sun is already sinking in the west reminding him that he has yet far to go, and that, do his best, it will be midnight ere he reaches his home, and for the last few miles he can only hope to have the light of stars to guide him on his way. The moon has risen, but she is a crescent, and by the time he arrives at the cedars where he would have liked to rest, this pale moon will only serve to deepen the shadows. As they near the cedars, his servant refuses to go on until morning; there are a few huts close by, one of the inhabitants is a goat herd whom he knows, and he will go no further. Nathan has faced solitude and darkness before now, when he knew not his way, and with a light heart he goes on alone, picks up some cedar cones as he passes under the older trees, thinks of a promise he made to Herbert Penryth long ago, that if ever he saw his own beautiful Lebanon,—that goodly mountain,—he should send him some cones from the oldest trees. The darkness comes on apace, the crescent moon has long passed out of sight, the darkness is intense, the solitude awful, not a sound of night bird or beast,—the wind is too light to stir the heavy branches of the cedars. Nathan needs all his hope and courage; now he is sure he is in the

right road, but it is steep and dangerous, one false step may hurl him down one of those fearful precipices into which in his boyhood he shuddered to look; he cannot discover the light he looks for, the light which twenty years ago, his mother promised should greet his coming, be his beacon on the way. His heart almost stops beating as he thinks "Perhaps my mother has been gathered to our fathers." On he presses with slow and careful step — in the midnight.

Darkness,— Silence.

Far up on Mount Lebanon, a hale old man is standing by an open door, which he has gone to secure for the night. He is looking out into the darkness, and thinking he has never seen it so intense. Inside the house his wife takes down from a shelf a large lamp and prepares to trim it. It feels light, too light to have oil enough to last till morning, "There is hardly a drop of oil in the lamp," she says in accents of sorrow, that seem out of place for so trivial a cause, "Miriam, bring the cruse, there may be yet a little oil left therein." Miriam comes forward with the cruse; her fair sweet face and dark eye expressing almost as much trouble as that of the woman who first spoke; she replies in a low voice:

"Oh, no, there is not a drop in the cruse."

The lamp is open, and the mistress takes the cruse from the girl's hand, turning it upside down over the lamp; it is useless, not a drop of oil comes. "Oh, Jacob! how could you be so forgetful," she says in an undertone, which low as it is, reaches the husband's ears. He

comes from the door, which he leaves partly open; an uneasy look on his face he is striving to hide.

"What matters it, Esther, if for one night the lamp should not be lit? For twenty years the oil has only been wasted, and will be, should you light it for twenty more; Nathan will never come home; I told you so when you consented he should go."

"I have never lost faith that he will come home," Esther replies, "and should he not, I will keep my vow, but how shall I keep it to-night? Do you think if I melt some of the sheep's fat it will burn in the lamp? Miriam, bring me some fat, we will try it."

The girl stands as if irresolute. Esther sees her hesitate and says, "You fear to go alone in the darkness; go, Jacob, withMiriam, she knows where the fat is laid."

"It is useless," the old man replies without moving, "fat will not burn in such a lamp."

"Come, Miriam, I will go with you myself; we must try," Esther says firmly. As she passes the half open door, she looks out into the dark night with a shudder, and pausing for a moment, says, turning towards her husband, "did you see how dark it is, Jacob? This is surely the darkness that may be felt, I do not think the hart could find his way to-night."

Jacob does not answer in words, but his face betrays intense emotion. He goes to the door by which his wife and niece left the room, and closing it, returns to the table where the empty lamp lies. He is strangely agitated, his nerves are strung to the utmost tension. He bends over the lamp and prays in words inaudible to human ear; suddenly he stands erect, his eye flashes,

—his heart is stirred with joy,—again with doubt; going to a stair which leads to an upper chamber he calls aloud, "Elkana."

"I am here," is the reply, and in a second or two, an old man with hair and beard as "white as snow in Salmon," comes down the stair.

"Elkana, there is no oil in Nathan's lamp;" Jacob points to the lamp as he speaks, "when the Rabbi David was last here he left in my charge, the flask with the oil for replenishing the perpetual lamp; will it be sin if I use this oil for Nathan's lamp?" He speaks with hesitation, yet there is an earnestness of purpose in his eye and voice.

"Nay, my son," the old man replies, "it will not be sin, the oil is needed for an act of mercy; I have suffered much in a dream this night because of Nathan. The angel of the covenant protect the lad."

"Come then, Elkana, you will hold the candle while I pour the oil in the lamp; I do not believe I will ever see Nathan's face in the flesh, but Esther is sorely troubled because of my neglect, and would have no rest to-night should the lamp be unlit."

Jacob takes the lamp and goes into an inner chamber, taking a key from his vest, he opens the cupboard where lies the flask of oil left by the Rabbi David. Jacob's hand trembles visibly as he pours the oil in the lamp and he murmurs audibly, "If this be sin, let the sin be upon my head alone, let my house be scathless."

"It is no sin, my son, to use the oil," the old man says in a solemn voice, "but it would be great sin not to use it; my spirit tells me the lad needs the light even now." While

he yet speaks the old man is going up the stairs to his chamber, there to plead with the God of his fathers for Nathan.

Jacob lights the lamp and places it in the window. When his wife and Miriam return with the fat he is standing in the open doorway looking up to the dark sky. As Esther places the fat on the table, she utters a cry of joy, and points to the lamp.

Nathan is struggling on amid the darkness. "If I am as near my father's house as I think I am, I should see my mother's lamp," he says almost aloud, and again he shudders with apprehension; "and Miriam, the pretty child I used to promise should be my wife if I ever came home; she too must be gone: that she never married, I know. Were she alive she would light the lamp."

He knows that each step he takes is fraught with danger; the road winds along the edge of a precipice, he stays his steps, debates with himself whether he will lie down where he is and wait for the dawn; he has been walking for hours since he parted from his servant; he is faint and worn with fatigue. Had he advanced one step further, a deep ravine would have ended his wanderings forever. Suddenly a light like a single star higher up on the Lebanon appears to the west. The sight fills Nathan's heart with a tumultuous joy; his weakness is gone—he turns towards the bright speck with the eager step of his boyhood. Brighter and brighter it glows, and then a long streak of light from an open door. It is gained; he is enfolded in the arms of

his father and mother, while Miriam, with beating heart and liquid eyes, stands apart.

"Father, the Stone is found! Dear mother, you kept your promise, your light saved my life to-night." He stretches a hand for Miriam; "Surely goodness and mercy hath followed me all the days of my life; and we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

THE END.

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Minister of St. Andrew's Church, Montreal.

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